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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, source of the light that never dims, empower us to glorify Your Name. Forgive us when we cast away our confidence in You. Lord, thank You for Your infinite goodness that directs our hearts to seek Your wisdom, power, and love.

Remember our lawmakers. Give them a faith that can overcome obstacles, challenges, and setbacks. Fill each of us with the joy and peace that comes from believing in You.

And, Lord, we thank You for the gift of Barbara Bush, as we praise You for her life and legacy.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will re-

sume consideration of S.J. Res. 57, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 57) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Indirect Auto Lending and Compliance with the Equal Credit Opportunity Act."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12 noon will be equally divided between the managers or their designees.

If no one yields time, the time will be charged equally.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING BARBARA BUSH

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate pays tribute this morning to a beloved American who passed away yesterday.

To our 41st President, her lucky husband, Barbara Pierce Bush was a beloved wife and partner for more than seven decades. To the American people, whom she lovingly served as an exemplary First Lady, she was one of the most respected and well-liked public figures of her generation. And to the 5 children, 17 grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and all the family Barbara Bush leaves behind at the age of 92, she was a beloved matriarch. By all accounts, she was equally capable of building up those she loved most and poking fun at them when they deserved it. Put simply, Barbara was a founding partner of the most influential political family of our era.

The epic love story of George Bush and Barbara Pierce began at a Christmas dance in 1941. The intimacy of wartime love letters beat back the vastness of oceans, and they married just weeks after George returned from the Pacific.

George once wrote that his beloved wife has "given me joy that few men know." Barbara put it this way just a few weeks before her passing: "I am

still old, and still in love." The love story grew and grew. Eventually, it incorporated the entire Nation.

Barbara embraced the mantle of "America's grandmother." The self-deprecating humor in that title was classic Barbara, but her plainspoken humility concealed formidable strengths and talents. Even under all the bright lights and the pressures of public scrutiny, she always combined wit with warmth, smarts with common sense, and great toughness with greater compassion. The beneficiaries of these qualities were many. The cause of literacy, in particular, bids farewell to a devoted champion, but above all, Barbara's life was defined by love. She loved her husband and her family. She loved her country, and America loved her back.

Today, the Senate stands united, as does the Nation, with the Bush family and their great many friends. We join them in mourning their loss and in prayer.

CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT RESOLUTION

Mr. President, later today, the Senate will vote on rolling back another piece of Obama-era overreach. Just like the historic 15 times we have already used the Congressional Review Act, the goal here is simple: We want to protect consumers and job creators from needless interference by the Federal bureaucracy. Today, thanks to Senators MORAN and TOOMEY, we can make it 16. We can nullify a particularly egregious overstep by President Obama's Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and notch another victory in this Congress's record of rolling back overregulation.

NOMINATION OF CARLOS MUNIZ

Mr. President, we will also vote to confirm President Trump's choice to serve as general counsel at the Department of Education, Carlos Muniz. This qualified nominee has been waiting for his confirmation vote since October. I would urge everyone to join me in voting to confirm him.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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S2227

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. President, we will also vote today to advance the Coast Guard Authorization Act. This is an important step for brave men and women whose work often flies under the radar. Today, as ever, the United States calls on our Coast Guard to carry out critical safety and security missions with little room for error. Just last year, Coast Guard personnel stopped over \$7 billion in illegal drugs and contraband from crossing our borders. They guarded and maintained shipping lanes, and they risked their lives to lead heroic rescues after Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

In addition to authorizing funding for the Coast Guard, this legislation includes a bipartisan measure that is particularly important to States with navigable inland waterways, such as Kentucky, Mississippi, Alaska, and others. I am very proud to have worked with Senators WICKER, SULLIVAN, THUNE, and RUBIO to make sure this provision was included. In Kentucky, 1,900 miles of navigable waterways are used to ship everything from agriculture to coal. They support 13,000 maritime jobs, and those jobs support countless others throughout America—moving food from the fields, energy to homes and businesses, and exports to market.

Our vessel owners and operators have been saddled with uncertainty. They have faced a patchwork of overlapping, duplicative regulations enforced by the Coast Guard, the EPA, and the States. This inefficient regulatory regime unnecessarily raises costs and jeopardizes jobs.

Our provision, the Commercial Vessel Incidental Discharge Act, would clean up that mess and make life easier for American mariners and vessel operators, while still protecting our environment. It would give them regulatory certainty and a single, uniform, cost-effective standard enforced by the Coast Guard. This predictable structure will protect our natural resources, while ensuring that commerce can flow freely to market.

This provision commands broad bipartisan support. It has been reported favorably out of the Commerce Committee six times during the last three Congresses, including when my Democratic colleagues controlled the committee.

I am glad that this year we have the opportunity to reauthorize funding for our Coast Guard and deliver this key victory at the same time.

TAX REFORM

Mr. President, on another matter, I noticed that a number of my Democratic colleagues attended a small protest rally yesterday. It was right here on the Capitol grounds. Apparently, it was put out by a number of leftwing pressure groups, including moveon.org, Planned Parenthood, and Big Labor.

What were they protesting out there? What outrage brought leading Democrats to join this protest on the east

front of the Capitol? It turns out it was the fact that Republicans let middle-class families and American small businesses keep more of their own money. That is right. The Democrats are rallying to repeal the tax cuts. Never mind that our own pro-growth tax reform has led to thousand-dollar bonuses, pay raises, educational opportunities, or other new benefits for literally millions of Americans. Democrats still want to repeal it. Never mind the new estimate that says tax reform will yield more than 1 million new jobs in the next decade or the fact that jobless claims are at their lowest levels since—listen to this—1973.

No amount of good news will shake Democrats' confidence that they know how to spend the American people's money better than the American people themselves. My friend the Democratic leader said so right here on the floor a few weeks ago. This is exactly what he said: "There are much better uses for the money." Really? On average, a family of four earning a median income will save about \$2,000 on their taxes. I don't think a middle-class family will have difficulty finding good ways to use \$2,000. They certainly don't need a bureaucrat to do it for them. Maybe they need a new washer and dryer or a new refrigerator. Maybe it will help them make the downpayment on a second car. Maybe they will use it to keep up with rising health costs since ObamaCare has utterly failed to keep costs down for American families. Whatever they choose, I am glad Republican tax reform is letting hard-working parents keep more of their own money.

But my Democratic colleagues obviously disagree. They are rallying to take back—to take back—that family's money so they can spend it themselves. They are so out of touch that they scoff at \$2,000 tax cuts, thousand-dollar bonuses, and permanent wages increases for hourly workers. They call them "crumbs"—"crumbs." To be fair, in the wealthiest parts of San Francisco or New York, maybe \$1,000 does look like a rounding error. We know those are the places our Democratic colleagues are literally focused on. When President Obama was in power, Democratic policies fueled an incredibly uneven economic recovery. By one estimate, the biggest, richest urban areas captured 73 percent of all job gains.

Meanwhile, millions of Americans in smaller cities, small towns, and rural areas saw little or no progress. Believe me, after years of being left behind by Democratic policies, the middle-class Kentuckians I represent and hard-working Americans all over the country do not see a \$1,000 bonus or a \$2,000 tax cut as "crumbs."

Democrats protest America's tax cuts, bonuses, and new jobs. They can protest it all they want to, but Republicans will keep defending middle-class families.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I want to briefly address an issue that has been raised in the context of the vote we will have later today. As you know, later today we will be using the Congressional Review Act to repeal a very ill-conceived regulation imposed by the CFPB. Some of our colleagues and some outside this Chamber have suggested that it is somehow problematic to use the Congressional Review Act—to use this device—for the repeal of a regulation that is promulgated by guidance as opposed to those regulations promulgated in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, which we usually refer to as a rule, or a rulemaking.

The reality is that the applicability of the Congressional Review Act to a guidance, in my view, is very obvious and very well-established and should not be controversial. I understand that people might like the CFPB's rule, which I don't, but to suggest that because they issued it through a guidance rather than through the appropriate rulemaking process, we shouldn't be using the Congressional Review Act, I think, is completely mistaken.

First of all, there is the CRA's definition of a rule. It is very broad and intentionally so. I will quote in part that definition. It says: "The whole or a part of an agency statement of general or particular applicability."

The text says nothing about limiting the Congressional Review Act procedural device to formal rulemakings that follow from the Administrative Procedure Act. It is much broader than that. Instead it says: "The whole or a part of an agency statement."

You don't have to just take my word for this. You could go back to the statements of the authors of the Congressional Review Act itself, the legislation that makes this vote today possible. One of the authors was none other than Harry Reid, the former Senate majority leader and Senate minority leader. Senator Reid was very clear about the intention. He and Senator Nickles, at the time, and Senator Stevens put out a joint statement, which I will quote. It is brief, but it is important. It says:

The authors are concerned that some agencies have attempted to circumvent notice-and-comment requirements by trying to give legal effect to general statements of policy, "guidelines," and agency policy and procedure manuals. The authors admonish the agencies that the APA's broad definition of "rule" was adopted by the authors of this legislation [the CRA] to discourage circumvention of the requirements of [the] chapter.

Here is the irony implied by the position of those who suggest we can't use the Congressional Review Act to repeal a guidance. What they really are suggesting is that the regulators and the agencies ought to be able to circumvent the very public process that is established in law—the Administrative Procedure Act—for rulemaking. They ought to be able to avoid the need to collaborate with other regulators to

issue a proposed rule to the public for an extensive comment period and to make it subject to scrutiny—all of the things we demand of a proper rule-making so that we end up with a better rule—right?—one that has been vetted, one that has been fully considered.

What you are saying is that the CRA is not applicable. When this is done by a guidance, you create an incentive for the agency to circumvent this very public scrutiny so that they can impose their will directly without it. That would clearly be a terrible outcome. Fortunately, the authors of this legislation wrote it precisely so that it could apply to a guidance, and they made it clear that was the outcome they wanted.

It doesn't end there, though. There have been more than a dozen instances already when Members of the Senate have asked the GAO to review guidance to determine whether that guidance rises to the level of importance and has the nature of a rulemaking so that it would be subject to the Congressional Review Act. As a matter of fact, within a single year of the passage of the Congressional Review Act, Congress asked GAO to review a guidance for this purpose. This has been done many times. In fact, it is our Democratic colleagues who set the precedent for attempting to overturn a guidance after the traditional CRA time window had expired because the guidance was not in the nature of a formal rulemaking.

In 2008, there was an effort by Senators Rockefeller and Baucus to overturn a CHIP guidance and to use the Congressional Review Act to do it, exactly as we are going to use today the Congressional Review Act to overturn a different guidance. That effort by Senators Rockefeller and Baucus had 41 cosponsors, including then-Senator Obama, Senators Biden, Clinton, Schumer, Durbin, Brown, and many other Democratic Senators who are still serving today. Senator Baucus, a Democrat, laid out the case. He said:

One agency attempted to ignore its obligations and circumvent the process established by the CRA. And the agency should not be rewarded.

I couldn't agree more. He is exactly right. Here is more from Senator Baucus:

This resolution is a way for Congress to send the message that it expects agencies to comply with the law. Congress should stand up for itself and disapprove of this rule, because it was not promulgated properly.

It makes perfect sense to be able to overturn a guidance that has the force of a rule, which is to say—really, let's be honest—the force of law was always contemplated as part of the CRA, and our Democratic colleagues attempted to use it for that very purpose. To do anything else would be to encourage the agencies to sneak around the Administrative Procedure Act, to avoid the public scrutiny and disclosure requirements, and promulgate rules through guidance routinely.

There is another more fundamental issue that I think we should be ac-

knowledging; that is, the use of the Congressional Review Act is a really important—a modest but important step in the direction of restoring accountability to Congress.

As the Presiding Officer understands very well, the Constitution is completely unambiguous. It is very clear. Legislative authority is vested in Congress. It is supposed to be our responsibility to write the laws, but we delegate a huge amount of authority and power to the executive branch. We say: Well, you write these rules. Maybe, it is too complicated or, maybe, we don't want to be held accountable for the outcome. It happens all the time. There has been a huge shift whereby the permanent bureaucracy, the administration, has an enormous amount of power to effectively write laws. We call them rules, sometimes guidance, but they have the power of law. They have the force of law. They are not optional. They are imposed on whatever industry or individual is subject to them. At a minimum, I think, Congress ought to be reviewing this. This is a mechanism for holding Congress accountable for the rules that we tolerate the agencies to promulgate. I think it is a really important step in that direction.

Again, to summarize, the use of the Congressional Review Act to repeal a guidance is well established. It is consistent with any plain reading of the law. It is consistent with the intent of the authors at the time. Congress has attempted to do so in the past. Democrats have attempted to do it, and it is a modest but important step in restoring the accountability of Congress with respect to the regulations that we encourage the executive branch to promulgate. There is no evidence that this somehow opens a floodgate of repeal, as some have suggested. But any guidance—in fact any rulemaking, I think, ultimately should be subject to congressional review because, after all, it is our authority in the first place that is used to generate it. I am pleased that we were able to agree to the motion to proceed yesterday. My understanding is that we will be voting sometime around noon or so on this. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of repealing this ill-conceived regulation and restoring some modicum of congressional accountability to the rule-making process.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING BARBARA BUSH

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, I send my heartfelt condolences to the

Bush family on the passing of former First Lady Barbara Bush. Simply put, Mrs. Bush was the personification of grace and class as First Lady and as a human being throughout her life. She will be missed by people on both sides of the aisle and by all Americans.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. President, let me begin with the issue of our Nation's foreign policy.

Over the weekend, the Ambassador to the U.N., Nikki Haley, went on national television to announce a new round of sanctions against Russia for enabling the brutal Assad regime to commit chemical weapons attacks against its own people. Only 24 hours later, the White House reversed course, and senior administration officials blamed Nikki Haley for being "confused."

The word "confused" may, in fact, define this administration's foreign policy. Does anyone at the White House talk to each other? Is there a coordinated strategy or is our foreign policy completely subject to the President's fleeting whims, changing as they do, day-to-day and moment-to-moment, often being guided by what some commentator says on television? Unfortunately, that is what it looks like from the outside, and it is going to put America and our interests abroad in danger.

Predictability and consistency in foreign policy are not boring. They are fundamental assets. It lets our allies know that we will support them, and it lets our adversaries know that they cannot get away with violating national norms. The erratic nature of this administration's foreign policy, exemplified by the abrupt reversal of Nikki Haley's announcement, is something all Americans should be worried about.

All Americans should be concerned about President Trump's disturbing decision to pull back from sanctioning Russia for its support of Assad and for its enabling of his use of chemical weapons in the wanton murder of his own people. This extends a sad pattern of inconsistency toward Russia's malign activities, both here in America and across the globe, when what is required of this administration are more aggressive, comprehensive, and consistent policy actions that impose on Putin and his allies sufficient costs to change their behavior.

A second foreign policy issue is the administration's ongoing efforts to secure a diplomatic deal with North Korea. We all want diplomacy to succeed with North Korea. My primary concern with the President and his efforts with respect to North Korea relate to preparation and to discipline. We are all aware that the President makes decisions about sensitive issues without seeking—or in spite of—expert advice. Indeed, his decision to move forward with the North Korea summit was an example of this type of decision making. Yet, whether or not there is ever a time and place for this sort of

decision making, it is unquestionably the wrong way to approach a tense summit between two nuclear-armed adversaries.

We should all root for a diplomatic solution to the decades-long North Korean conflict because we know the costs of war on the Korean Peninsula would be catastrophic. That is why the United States should pursue a diplomatic opening, including through direct diplomacy with Pyongyang. Yet, thus far, we have not seen any indication that North Korea is willing to take concrete measures toward denuclearization.

We have read this book before, and I am concerned that the administration, without its having a clear or coherent strategy, is buying a pile of magic beans at the cost of our allies and partners and our own security. As Secretary Gates once said, "I'm tired of buying the same horse twice." There is a diplomatic pathway forward with North Korea. It is just not clear that President Trump is on it or would even know how to find it or stay on it.

TRADE

Mr. President, on another matter, trade, the President and I don't agree on a whole lot, but on the issue of China's rapacious trading policies, we see eye to eye. Presidents from both parties, in my estimation, have failed to act strongly enough against the threat posed by China. President Trump, unlike both Presidents Bush and Obama, is finally doing something about it. I remain disappointed, however, that the President passed up the opportunity, once again, to label China as a currency manipulator.

Nonetheless, yesterday, a really good thing happened. The FCC voted unanimously to advance a measure to limit the ability of Chinese telecom companies to sell in the United States—chiefly Huawei and ZTE, two major Chinese telecom companies. Huawei and ZTE are both state-backed companies. Their effort to enter the American market is a great example of how China attempts to steal our private data and intellectual property. The FCC has said that allowing these two companies into the United States would pose a national security threat because it would give state-backed Chinese companies "hidden 'back doors' to our networks" that would allow them "to inject viruses and other malware, steal Americans' private data, spy on U.S. businesses, and more." Those are the FCC's words.

The United States is a world leader in high-tech manufacturing and development, so, naturally, China's Government is going after that lucrative industry and continues to try to steal its way to a competitive advantage. Every one of our top industries that employs millions of Americans in good-paying jobs and makes our economy the envy of the world is targeted by the Chinese. This one is no different.

So I applaud the FCC's decision and President Trump for pursuing a tough course of action against China and its

rapacious trading policies. The President is exactly right about China in that it seeks to take advantage of the United States in innumerable ways by undercutting our products, stealing our intellectual property, and denying American companies market access. I strongly encourage the FCC to finalize this measure, and I encourage President Trump to stick with his tougher posture toward China.

LEGISLATION BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. President, finally, a note about floor action this week. The Republicans are pushing, in succession, legislation that hurts labor rights and working people, consumers, the environment, and communities of color. President Trump, during his campaign, would often wonder aloud about what these folks had to lose by voting for him. Now we know.

The Republican majority seems intent on putting forward heavily partisan bills that have no chance of passing or have little practical impact but are simply designed to be divisive. That is not going to get us anywhere, and it is turning the Senate, which all of us want to be a deliberative, bipartisan body, into a bit of a farce this week—no debate, no amendments.

So I suggest to my colleagues on the other side: Let's get back to pursuing bipartisan accomplishments that actually advance the interests of the American worker, the American consumer, and the middle class. After all, that is what we were elected to do.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, thank you very much.

I come to the floor again today to visit a moment about S.J. Res. 57. It disapproves the CFPB guidance on indirect auto lending. This is a piece of legislation I introduced, and I appreciate the strong and valuable assistance I have had from the Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. TOOMEY, and certainly the chairman of the Banking Committee, the Senator from Idaho, and other colleagues.

I want to talk just a moment about process, the use of a CRA, and the fact that the CFPB utilized what they called guidance as compared to a rule-making process.

I want to make certain that my colleagues understand that Agencies and Departments still would be encouraged to put out guidance to ensure appropriate compliance with the law. This CRA resolution ought not have a chilling effect on guidance because guidance is a useful tool. It can be helpful to those who are being regulated, but it needs to be issued for tra-

ditional purposes—guidelines for complying with Federal law.

One of the CFPB's errors in issuing this guidance in this instance was that they proceeded down the path of an aggressive enforcement action in search of market-tipping settlements. If enforcement action is desired on the part of the agency, then a full rulemaking process ought to be conducted, and that is what the CFPB did not do. The CFPB used the guidance as an enforcement weapon instead of guidance in its more traditional and helpful purpose. It is important that we in Congress reorient the guidance process back to its intended form by ensuring that the CFPB cannot replicate its mistakes with regard to indirect auto lending.

The authors of the Congressional Review Act that we are operating under on this resolution, Senators Nickles, Reid, and Stevens, in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of April 1996, said: "The authors are concerned that some agencies have attempted to circumvent notice-and-comment requirements by trying to give legal effect to general statements of policy, 'guidelines,' and agency policy and procedure manuals."

Even in 1996, my previous colleagues were concerned about what actually transpired at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Clearly, the CRA was passed in 1996 with the understanding that agency guidance had been used inappropriately.

It is important for Congress to reassert its role in policymaking from the executive branch. All Members of Congress ought to be committed to conducting oversight over the rest of the Federal Government. Failure on the part of Congress to hold Federal agencies to account when they stray from their statutory and congressionally intended jurisdiction means we will get de facto legislation being originated in the executive branch. This effort is about making certain that the form and function of the Federal Government is accountable to the American people.

Kansans hold me to account for the actions I take in Washington, DC, on their behalf. In turn, they expect me to hold other components of their government to account. Congress is the link between the American people and the Federal Government. I will continue to use the position that Kansans have entrusted to me to make certain I am representing their interest in Washington, DC, and can do so only by working with my Senate colleagues to oversee and correct mistakes made by other branches of the government. Today, we will do that with the adoption of S.J. Res. 57.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

REMEMBERING BARBARA BUSH

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I want to say a few words—I know a number of my colleagues have—before I start my discussion on the very important Coast Guard bill we are debating on the floor.

America lost a wonderful example of a strong woman, Mrs. Barbara Bush, yesterday. I think the entire country and I know the whole Senate sends its prayers and condolences to the Bush family.

If you want an example of an American citizen who represents strength, dignity, and class, and who really served our Nation so well, it was Barbara Bush. The thoughts and prayers of the Senate are with the Bush family right now.

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. President, as the Presiding Officer who sits on the Armed Services Committee with me knows, each year this body, the Congress—House and Senate—passes the Defense Authorization Act or the NDAA as it is called. It is an important bill. It moves forward the policies and authorizations of spending for the men and women serving in the military. It can be contentious, but at the end of the day for over a half century we have moved that bill forward each year.

We always forget one of the branches of the U.S. military—the men and women who serve in the Coast Guard of the United States of America. We don't always move the Coast Guard Authorization Act forward. That is not because they are not as important as the other Members of the military. In some ways, it is just a twist of the organization here in Congress. The Coast Guard is under the jurisdiction of the Commerce Committee not the Armed Services Committee and is under the executive branch jurisdiction of the Department of Homeland Security, not the Pentagon. It is still an incredibly important organization for all of us, and so today we are going to vote on the Coast Guard Authorization Act, that we should be moving every year just like we move the NDAA because the men and women who serve in the Coast Guard are some of America's finest citizens.

I see my colleague from Mississippi, Senator WICKER, joining me on the floor. We have been working on this bill, the Coast Guard Authorization Act, for about 1 year now. We faced a lot of roadblocks, and we have moved forward on a bipartisan basis to finally get this important bill to the floor.

As the chairman of the subcommittee in charge of the Coast Guard, I feel it is very important to take a minute on the Senate floor to speak about what the men and women in our Coast Guard do on a daily basis so everybody, the people watching back home and the people in my State, the great State of Alaska, know just how important the Coast Guard is and how we are focusing on them.

Many people in the country know the Coast Guard as the heroic Americans who literally come out of the sky to rescue us when we are in trouble, particularly on the high seas. I have heard them described as angels in helicopters with courage and dignity and strength. When they show up, it is certainly America witnessing its very best.

Let me give just a few examples of what the Coast Guard does on a daily basis—certainly in my State. Here are a few examples from just the past few weeks:

In Oregon, a Coast Guard aircrew rescued four commercial fishermen after their 54-foot fishing vessel capsized off the coast of Rockaway Beach.

In Kauai, HI, the Coast Guard is assisting in recovery efforts following a storm dropping more than 27 inches of rain, causing severe flooding.

On Sunday, the Coast Guard rescued four people from the water in Blackwater Sound near Key Largo, FL, and they rescued eight people aboard a disabled vessel just a few days ago near Pensacola Bay Bridge, FL.

In New York, the Coast Guard crew just medevacked a 25-year-old man from a fishing vessel.

In my great State of Alaska, the Coast Guard is vital. Alaska has more coastline than the rest of the country combined. Think about that. Just in the past few weeks, there have been numerous rescues, as there typically are in Alaska given our tough weather, including a 44-year-old man from a fishing vessel outside of Dutch Harbor, a 59-year-old man from the waters off the Aleutian chain, and another 43-year-old man who was stranded on the barrier islands—just in the last couple of weeks.

Every one of these individuals—Americans—is alive today because of the Coast Guard. They are someone's father, brother, mother, daughter. They are someone's loved ones, and the men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard had the courage to go out and rescue them.

All in all, in addition to numerous humanitarian and law enforcement operations, including drug interdictions and coming to the rescue of hundreds of migrants who were on overcrowded and unsafe vessels, the Coast Guard is working 24/7 for us, 365 days a year. Their mission also includes icebreaking, marine and environmental protection, port security, international crisis response—the response to hurricanes that so many Americans saw over the last several months—and readiness to support Department of Defense operations, as they are the fifth branch of the U.S. military. Sometimes we forget that.

So this bill that we are debating right now and that we are going to be voting on in a little bit here on the Senate floor is the bill that sets the policies, the spending authorization, and the readiness standards for the entire U.S. Coast Guard. It is enormously important, and I believe it should pass in a bipartisan way—the way it passed out of the Commerce Committee—with a strong vote from Senators, Republicans and Democrats, on both sides of the aisle.

The Coast Guard Authorization Act also contains many important items for our fishermen, fisheries, maritime industries, maritime unions, and mari-

time workers. Let me give some important examples.

Included in this legislation is language to permanently fix issues that have plagued our fishermen and our commercial vessel owners and operators in the maritime industry and the workers in that industry for decades. We have an opportunity here to make good policy—again, bipartisan policy—that we have been debating for years in the Congress.

Currently, our fishing fleets and vessel owners and operators are forced to comply with a patchwork of burdensome Federal and State regulations for ballast water and incidental discharges.

Let me start by talking about the incidental discharges. If you are a commercial fisherman on a vessel and you catch some fish and you want to hose off your deck because you have fish parts where you may have gutted and headed fish—let's face it, the fishing industry can be a bit messy—under current law, believe it or not, you have to get permission from the EPA to do this. You need a permit, and if you don't have one, you can face a fine. OK, think about that. You have taken a fish out of the water. You have processed it. You are hosing down your deck. It has some fish guts on it. For the fish parts to go back into the ocean, you need a permit. Yes, everybody in the country thinks this is ridiculous, and it is. It creates inefficiencies, adds business costs, inhibits economic prosperity in States like mine, certainly, and it kills jobs.

Most fishermen—most fishing vessels—are small business owners. They are the ultimate small business owners. They take risks. They work hard. They create and produce a great product, such as wild Alaska salmon. Yet we are regulating them with these kinds of inefficient regulations that nobody supports. It is just another burden that we put on the men and women who are actually trying to make a living and create economic opportunities for others. So this bill, which has strong bipartisan support, does away with that because it makes no sense.

Another provision in this bill tries to cut through a patchwork of burdensome State regulations for vessel ballast water. Currently, ballast water is regulated under both the Coast Guard and the EPA—dual regulations. That is trouble enough. They each have separate and inconsistent and sometimes directly conflicting sets of Federal requirements, and then you layer on State requirements too.

Let me give an example. You are a commercial vessel owner/operator going up the full length of the Mississippi River. Right now, not only must you comply with the inconsistent Coast Guard and EPA requirements, but you also have to comply with different and separate requirements from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas. Again, it makes no sense. There are 25 States regulating

ballast water under separate, inconsistent, and often directly conflicting sets of requirements. This cripples not only the American economy but also the hard-working men and women of our country who work in the maritime industry.

By the way, it makes it more likely that invasive species—a very real and serious issue—will accidentally be introduced because there is such a conflicting patchwork of regulations. I am very aware of the invasive species issues that plague different States. There are a lot of concerns we have heard, and certainly we have addressed it in this bill—from the Great Lakes.

If the current patchwork system worked, well, I think a number of us would be supportive, but it simply doesn't work. It is not working at all, and it is only getting worse. This confusing array of requirements will only continue to grow, confusing vessel owners and operators and their workers and making it literally almost impossible to comply. The EPA says one thing, the Coast Guard says another thing, and 25 different States say 25 different other things.

One person who knows this issue very well is the current Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Zukunft. Just yesterday, he told the House Appropriations Committee that “it makes sense to have one entity” regulating vessels—at very high standards but one entity. “I really put myself in the shoes of a mariner,” he said, talking about how difficult it is with the current system. “Competing entities doing the enforcement operations” is not working. He said that the Coast Guard understands the issue best, understands the mariners, and also, importantly, understands the technology.

Even the EPA has said that the rules developed by the Coast Guard, which knows this issue best, will work for them because our bill requires concurrence with the EPA. Under the legislation that we are debating right now in the Senate, you cannot set a standard unless the EPA concurs, which is important. They essentially have a veto over this, but they know that the Agency that is best suited to regulate moving vessels on the water is not their Agency—the professional staff of the EPA have said that—it is the Coast Guard, which is where we put the regulatory authority in this bill.

Further, under the bill, States have the authority to enforce the Federal regulations regarding ballast water and incidental discharge. So the States still have a lot of power and authority on the enforcement side in this bill.

This confusing patchwork of regulations only diminishes the overall effectiveness of U.S. efforts to meet the high environmental standards that we all want. We need strong, uniform, national standards to keep our waters clean and to defend against invasive species, and we also need these standards so the workers and the people in this industry—a huge industry for America—can go and do their job.

The good news here is that we have been working on this issue for at least the past 3 years that I have been in the Senate, but we have really been working on it for decades. For the most part, we have had strong bipartisan support to get this bill done. Let me give some examples.

There are 23 Members from both sides of the aisle who have cosponsored these vessel incidental discharge provisions that I am talking about—23 cosponsors. Many more signed on to a letter of support for this, Democrats and Republicans.

This bill has been voted out of committee several times. It has strong bipartisan support—including when the Democrats were in control of the Senate a couple years ago. We all worked diligently to make sure we addressed all the issues and concerns raised by many Members, and we even got some longtime opponents to come over and support this bill, again through the great work of my colleague from Mississippi. Let me give another example of that.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter of support from a very broad-based group of unions, workers, small businesses, maritime operators, and fishermen.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

APRIL 16, 2018.

DEAR SENATOR: We are writing to express our strong support for Title VIII of S. 1129, the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2017, the bipartisan Vessel Incidental Discharge Act (VIDA). Our organizations represent U.S. and international vessel owners and operators; fishing vessel, passenger vessel and charterboat operators; labor unions; marine terminals and port authorities national business organizations; and industries that rely on maritime shipping to transport essential cargoes in domestic and international commerce.

VIDA is the product of bipartisan leadership and negotiation to construct a framework that will protect our waterways, foster efficient and cost-effective maritime commerce, and maintain appropriate roles for the Coast Guard, EPA and states. It is imperative that this legislation be enacted without further delay. We respectfully urge you to support the motion to proceed, cloture and final passage of S.1129.

VIDA, which currently has 24 bipartisan Senate cosponsors and 37 bipartisan House cosponsors, would eliminate a regulatory burden hindering interstate and international commerce by replacing a patchwork of federal and state regulations with uniform national standards for the regulation of ballast water and other discharges incidental to normal vessel operations. The bill would also maintain protective measures jointly undertaken by industry and federal agencies to reduce the movement of invasive species on the navigable waterways.

Without VIDA, commercial vessel owners will spend millions of dollars installing on-board equipment to comply with Coast Guard and EPA requirements, but still be at risk of fines and penalties for violating state requirements that cannot be met by existing technology. This overlapping patchwork of federal and state regulations kills jobs, undermines the efficiency of maritime trans-

portation, increases business costs, and places mariners at risk of civil and criminal prosecution. It also delays investments in treatment technology that will strengthen environmental protection.

VIDA would provide vessel owners and mariners with a predictable and transparent regulatory structure in which vessel incidental discharges are regulated and enforced by the U.S. Coast Guard, using as its baseline the ballast water discharge standard that EPA's Science Advisory Board has determined to be the most stringent currently achievable. The bill will ensure the installation of high-performing technologies on commercial vessels, and allows for improvements in the national standard as technology improves. VIDA also preserves the ability of states to enforce the federal ballast water discharge standard, petition for a higher standard, work with Coast Guard to develop best management practices, and regulate recreational vessels operating in their waters.

VIDA will also permanently exempt fishing vessels and vessels under 79 feet from EPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit program. These vessels have been operating under a series of temporary exemptions enacted by Congress. Permanent relief is needed for the operators of these vessels, as long-term regulatory certainty is needed for the operators of large commercial vessels.

VIDA will strengthen protections for America's waterways, provide a stable regulatory structure for interstate and international maritime commerce, and eliminate needlessly duplicative regulatory programs. Please support passage of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2017.

Respectfully,

ADM; AccuTrans, Inc.; AEP River Transportation; AK Steel; Alabama Charter Fishing Association; Albany Port District Commission; Alaska Charter Association; American Association of Port Authorities; American Commercial Barge Line LLC; American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers; American Great Lakes Ports Association; American Institute of Marine Underwriters (AIMU); American Iron and Steel Institute; American Maritime Congress; American Maritime Officers; American Maritime Officers Service; American Petroleum Institute; American Petroleum Tankers; American President Lines, LLC; American River Transportation Company.

American Roll-on Roll-off Carrier (ARC); American Steamship Company; American Tunaboat Association; Amherst Madison, Inc.; Andrie Inc.; ArcelorMittal USA; Armstrong Steamship Company; Associação E6 de Armadores da Marinha do Comércio; Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Association; At-sea Processors Association; Avalon Freight Services; Bahamas Shipowners Association; Bay Shipbuilding Company; Baydelta Maritime; Bay-Houston Towing Company; Beach Haven Charter Fishing Association; Bell Steamship Company; Benchmark Marine Agency; Blessey Marine Services, Inc.; Borghese Lane LLC.

Bren Transportation Corp.; Brown Water Marine Service, Inc.; Buffalo Marine Service, Inc.; C & J Marine Services, Inc.; C&M Shipping & Trading Agency, Inc.; Callais & Sons, LLC; Calumet River Fleet, Inc.; Campbell Transportation Company, Inc.; Canal Barge Company, Inc.; CanforNav Ltd.; Cape Cod Charter Boat Association; Carmeuse Lime and Stone; Central Boat Rentals, Inc.; Central Dock Company; Central Marine Logistics; CGBM 100, LLC; Chamber of Marine Commerce; Chamber of Shipping (Canada); Chamber of Shipping of America; Channel Design Group.

Charterboat Association of Puget Sound; Chesapeake Bay Charter Boat Association;

Chicago & Western Great Lakes Port Council; MTD, AFL-CIO; Chicago Sportfishing Association; Chincoteague Island Charterboat Association; City of Superior, Wisconsin; Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority; Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.; CN, Duluth, MN; ConocoPhillips; Consumer Energy; Consumer Energy Alliance—Midwest; C-PORT, Conference of Professional Operators for Response Towing; Crounse Corporation; Crowley Maritime Corporation; Cruise Lines International Association; CSX Transportation, Toledo Docks; Cyprus Shipping Chamber; D & S Marine Service, L.L.C.; Daniels Shipping Service.

Dann Marine Towing, LC; Dann Ocean Towing, Inc.; Deale Captains Association; Deloach Marine Services; Detroit-Wayne County Port Authority; Devall Brothers Barge Line II, LLC; Devall Brothers Towing II, LLC; Devall Commercial Barge Line, LLC; Devall Diesel Services, LLC; Devall Enterprises, LLC; Devall Offshore Barge Line, LLC; Devall Offshore, LLC; Devall Resources, Inc.; Devall Third Generation Towing, LLC; Devall Towing & Boat Service of Hackberry, L.L.C.; Dock 63; Donjon Marine Co., Inc.; Donjon Shipbuilding & Repair; Dredging Contractors of America; DTE Electric Co.

Duluth Seaway Port Authority; Durocher Marine; E Squared Marine Service, LLC; E.N. Bisso & Son, Inc.; Eastern Lake Erie Charterboat Association; Edw. C. Levy Co.; Ergon Marine and Industrial Supply; Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority; European Community Shipowners' Associations; Evansville Marine Service, Inc.; Faroese Merchant Shipowners Association; Faulkner, Hoffman & Phillips; Fednav Ltd.; Fishing Vessel Owner's Association; Florida Guides Association, Inc.; Foss Maritime Company; Fraser Shipyards; General Marine Services LLC; Genesee Charter Association, Inc.; Global Marine Transportation, Inc.; Golden Gate Fishermen's Association.

Golding Barge Line, Inc.; Grand River Navigation Company; Great Lakes District Council-ILA, AFL-CIO; Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company, LLC; Great Lakes Fleet; Great Lakes Maritime Task Force; Greater Point Pleasant Charter Boat Association; Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association; Hackberry Land, LLC; Hallett Dock Company; Harbor Towing & Fleeting, LLC; Harley Marine Services; Hawaii Resource Group LLC; Higman Marine Services, Inc.; Homer Charter Association; Hong Kong Shipowners Association; Hughes Bros., Inc.; Huntington District Waterways Association; ILA Lake Erie Coal & Ore Dock Council; ILA Local 1317.

ILA Local 1768; Illinois Chamber of Commerce; Illinois International Port District; Illinois Marine Towing, Inc.; Ilwaco Charter Association; Indian National Shipowners' Association; Indiana's North Coast Charter Association; Ingram Barge Company; Inland Lakes Management; Inland Marine Service; Int'l Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers District Lodge 1943; Int'l Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers District Lodge 4; Int'l Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers District Lodge 60; Int'l Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers District Lodge 65; Int'l Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers District Lodge 98; Integrity—Black Lake Fleeting Services, LLC; Integrity Terminal and Marine Services, LLC; International Association of Drilling Contractors; International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers; International Brotherhood of Boilermakers.

International Chamber of Shipping; International Longshoremen's Association; International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots; International Propeller Club of the

United States; International Shipmasters' Association; International Shipmasters' Association (St. Catharines ON); International Union of Operating Engineers, Locals 49, 139, 150 and 324; InterShip, Inc.; INTERTANKO; Irish Chamber of Shipping; J&J Maritime Operators, LLC; Jacksonville Marine Transportation Exchange; James Transportation, LLC; JANTRAN, Inc.; Japanese Shipowners' Association; JB Marine Service, Inc.; JEFFBOAT LLC; Juneau Charter Boat Operators Association; K&L Gates LLP; Kindra Lake Towing, LP.

Kirby Corp.; Lake Carriers' Association; Lake Erie Ship Repair & Fabrication; Lake Michigan Carferry Service; Lake Michigan Yachting Association; Lakes Pilots Association; LeBeouf Bros. Towing, LLC; Liberian Shipowners' Council Ltd; Liberty Maritime Corporation; Lorain Port Authority; Louisiana Association of Waterways Operators and Shipyards; Luedtke Engineering Company; M&P Barge Company, Inc.; Maersk, Inc.; Magnolia Marine Transport Co.; Maine Association of Charter Captains; Manatee County Port Authority; Marco Island Charter Captains Association; Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association; Marine Tech.

Maritime Association of the Port of New York-New Jersey; Maritime Institute for Research and Industrial Development; Maritime Port Council of Greater NY/NJ & Vicinity; Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO; Marquette Transportation Company, Inc.; Maryland Charterboat Association; Maryland Port Administration; McAllister Towing; MCM Marine; Metal Trades Department, AFL-CIO; Michigan City Charterboat Association; Michigan Maritime Trades Port Council, MTD, AFL-CIO; Midwater Trawlers Cooperative; Midwest Energy Resources Company; Mississippi Charter Boat Captains Association; Montana Coal Council; Moran Iron Works; Moran Towing Corporation; Muskegon Port Advisory Committee; National Association of Charterboat Operators.

National Association of Manufacturers; National Association of Maritime Organizations; National Association of Waterfront Employers; National Grain and Feed Association; National Mining Association; Navy League of the United States; New York Shipping Association; Norfolk Southern Corporation; Norfolk Tug Company; North Pacific Fishing Vessel Owners Association; Northeast Charterboat Captains Association; Northern Neck Charter Captains; Northwest Marine Trades Association; Octopus Towing LLC; Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority; Osborne Concrete & Stone Co.; Overseas Shipholding Group (OSG); P&M Marine Services LLC; P&R Water Taxi LLC; Panama City Boatmen Association.

Parker Towing Company, Inc.; Passenger Vessel Association; Pere Marquette Shipping Company; Petersburg Charterboat Association; Philadelphia Regional Port Authority; Polsteam USA Inc.; Port City Marine Services, Inc.; Port City Steamship Holding Company, Inc.; Port of Green Bay; Port of Milwaukee; Port of Monroe, Michigan; Port of Oswego Authority; Ports of Indiana; Prince William Sound Charter Boat Association; Progressive Barge Line, Inc.; Rod 'N' Reel Captains Assoc. Inc.; Ryba Marine Construction Company; Saltchuk; Sause Bros.; SCF Marine Inc.

Seabulk Towing; Seafarers International Union; Shipping Federation of Canada; Singapore Shipping Association; Solomon's Charter Captains Association; Soo Marine Supply, Inc.; Southeast Alaska Guides Organization; Southern Offshore Fishing Association; Southern Towing Company; Spanish Shipowners' Association; Spliethoff; St. Lawrence Seaway Pilots Association; Steel Manufacturers Association; Tata Steel; Ten Mile Exchange LLC; Terral River Service,

Inc.; Texas Waterways Operators Association; The American Waterways Operators; The CSL Group Inc.; The Interlake Steamship Company.

The King Co.; The Port of New Orleans; The Royal Association of Netherlands Shipowners; The Upper Bay Charter Captains Association; The Vane Brothers Company; Tidewater Barge Lines, Inc.; Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority; Toledo Port Council, MTD, AFL-CIO; TPG Chicago Dry Dock; TradeWinds Towing LLC; Transportation Institute; Trojan Technologies Inc.; Turn Services, LLC; U.S. Chamber of Commerce; U.S. Steel Corporation; UK Chamber of Shipping; Union of Greek Shipowners; United Boatmen of New Jersey; United States Great Lakes Shipping Association; United Steelworkers, District 1, AFL-CIO-CLC.

United Steelworkers, Local 5000; Upper Mississippi Waterway Association; Upper River Services, LLC; VanEnkevort Tug & Barge Inc.; Verplank Dock Co.; Victoria Fleet, LLC; Virginia Charter Boat Association; Virginia Maritime Association; Wagenborg Shipping North America; Water Quality Insurance Syndicate; Waukegan Charter Boat Association; Wepfer Marine Inc; West Dock and Market—Port of Muskegon; WESTAR Marine Services; Western Great Lakes Pilots Association, LLP; Western States Petroleum Association; Westport Charter Boat Association; Wilmington Tug, Inc.; Wood Towing, LLC; World Shipping Council; and World Shipping Inc.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I won't go into it. I have seen a lot of these kinds of letters supporting legislation, but I have rarely seen a letter that is pages and pages long—steelworkers, International Union of Operating Engineers, Juneau Charter Boat Operators Association, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, Eastern Lake Erie Charterboat Association. This letter supporting the Coast Guard bill has many different groups supporting it, and that is why there has been so much strong bipartisan support.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I wonder if my colleague will yield on that point.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I will be glad to yield.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I appreciate the Senator from Alaska mentioning the broad base of support, and it occurs to me that this legislation has garnered the support of the chamber of commerce and organized labor.

Mr. SULLIVAN. That is correct.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, in an effort not to take up too much time, the Senator from Alaska didn't mention that the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers is for this bill. The International Longshoremen's Association is for this bill. We have crafted something—with the help of Democrats and the help of Republicans, with the help of labor and business—that has brought these people together to help us protect American maritime jobs.

I want to commend the Senator from Alaska also for the work he has done in accommodating people.

I ask my friend, am I correct that this is not the first version we had of this bill?

Mr. SULLIVAN. That is correct.

We actually made literally dozens of changes over the last several months

to accommodate almost every single Senator that had requested a change to address some of their issues. We have made numerous changes to this bill, for Republicans and Democrats, to make sure we have strong bipartisan support, and we are certainly hoping that the changes we made for so many Senators who have been supportive of the bill will now lead a strong bipartisan vote here in a little bit.

Mr. WICKER. I am not going to ask my colleague to yield all of his time to me, but I would just observe this to my friends on both sides of the aisle. This is the kind of bipartisan legislative effort on the part of my colleague from Alaska that ought to be rewarded.

A Member of the minority party has come to him expressing concerns, and those concerns have largely been met at every pass. It is not like we are trying to jam something on the part of the business community or the far right. I just have to say to my colleague from Alaska that he has done a heroic effort. We need a couple of more votes from people who have, at one time or another, expressed strong support for this legislation.

Mr. SULLIVAN. They have not only expressed strong support but have cosponsored this legislation.

Mr. WICKER. We really should send a signal to the American people that we trust each other, that we appreciate somebody like the Senator from Alaska who has bent over backward to make this work for America, to make this work for labor, to make this work for the waterway operators, and to make this work for the environment. I think this will enhance the environmental system in our waterways all over the country.

I thank the Senator for yielding time. Once again, I just have to say how much I admire the statesmanship of this relatively junior Senator from Alaska in working across the aisle and making this a bill that we ought to all be proud of.

I thank the Senator for yielding.

Mr. SULLIVAN. I thank the Senator from Mississippi for his very kind words. This has been a team effort. We have been working together. Democrats have been working with us. My colleagues from Florida, from Pennsylvania—we have all been down here talking about this. I know there are going to be strong votes in favor.

I do want to mention that the minority leader was just on the floor, and he ended his remarks that he just made a couple of minutes ago about how it is really important for the Senate to get back to bipartisan accomplishments that help the American worker. He just said that. Well, my colleague from New York, I couldn't agree more. That is what this bill is.

I am going to mention one other thing before I actually do my presiding time. I appreciate the Presiding Officer giving me a few additional minutes before I get in the Chair.

We have been dealing with this issue. Some have raised the issue that they

are concerned about what the vessel incidental discharge provisions in this bill that I just talked about could do to the environment. I am from the great State of Alaska. We have the most pristine, beautiful environment in the world, and the cleanest water in the world. We want to keep it that way. I am all about that.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this document be submitted in the RECORD called "The Vessel Incidental Discharge Act: Good for the Environment—Good for Business."

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE VESSEL INCIDENTAL DISCHARGE ACT:
GOOD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT—GOOD FOR
BUSINESS

The Vessel Incidental Discharge Act, or "VIDA," would require the Coast Guard and the EPA to establish uniform, national standards for the treatment and management of ballast water and other discharges incidental to the normal operation of vessels. Treatment of ballast water is an important safeguard against the introduction of aquatic invasive species. The bill would establish an initial ballast water treatment standard equivalent to the Coast Guard and EPA's current standards—the most stringent standard current technology can achieve. For incidental discharges other than ballast water (such as deck runoff, anchor effluent, etc), the bill would require the establishment of best management practices within two years of the date of enactment of the Act.

MYTHS VERSUS FACTS

Myth #1: The bill lowers the environmental standards for ballast water.

FACT: The new standards and requirements would be required to be based upon the best available technology economically achievable (BATEA), and would ramp up over time as new, more advanced technology becomes available. Specifically, the bill incorporates the Clean Water Act's BATEA regulatory regime to establish its uniform standards and revise them to be more stringent over time.

Myth #2: The current regulatory regime works.

FACT: Today, the Coast Guard, EPA, and 25 states are regulating ballast water under separate, inconsistent, and sometimes directly conflicting sets of requirements. This not only cripples the American economy, but also makes it more likely that invasive species will accidentally be introduced.

Myth #3: The EPA has the expertise to enforce ballast water standards.

FACT: The Coast Guard is the United States' premier maritime law enforcement service. It currently enforces ballast water standards through vessel inspections, not the EPA. However, the service cannot do a thorough and robust job because of the current patchwork and contradictory regulatory regime. This bill gives the Coast Guard the clarity and authority it needs to do a good job.

Myth #4: There is no science behind the new national standards.

FACT: This bill sets a current federal ballast water discharge standard, which the EPA's Science Advisory Board deemed the most stringent currently achievable. Moreover, when ramping up those standards, the Coast Guard, in consultation with the EPA, will set the new standard based on sound science and the best available technology economically achievable.

Myth #5: The bill undermines a States' ability to regulate ballast water.

FACT: The bill ensures that States will be able to enforce Federal requirements and, importantly, that States will be able to set future standards and best practices through an exhaustive petitioning process.

As an example, both the Coast Guard and EPA require a ballast water management system (BWMS) aboard a vessel covered by their regulations. On the one hand, the Coast Guard's regulations generally require that a BWMS be type-approved by the Coast Guard. In the case of a manufacturer whose BWMS has been approved by a foreign regulatory authority pursuant to Convention standards, that manufacturer may request a Coast Guard determination that its BWMS qualifies as an Alternate Management System (AMS). On the other hand, the EPA's Vessel General Permit (VGP) requires only that a BWMS "has been shown to be effective by testing conducted by an independent third party laboratory, test facility or test organization." Although a BWMS approved by the Coast Guard is deemed by the VGP to comply with its effectiveness requirement, a BWMS may also be tested and found effective under the VGP by another "laboratory, test facility, or test organization," even though it has not been approved by the Coast Guard. Thus a BWMS could end up being installed on a vessel in compliance with the VGP, yet not comply with Coast Guard regulations.

On top of this duplicative, inconsistent, and confusing Federal regime, subjecting vessels to NPDES has opened the door for States to establish their own varying standards and requirements for vessel discharges. California, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington are among those that already have promulgated their own ballast water management requirements that also apply to commercial vessels navigating in State waters. In 2006, the State of California enacted a ballast water treatment standard at the recommendation of the California State Lands Commission (CSLC) that requires less than 0.01 living organisms measuring between 10 and 50 micrometers per milliliter of ballast water discharged (1000 times the IMO D-2 standard) and requires zero detectable living organisms greater than 50 micrometers per milliliter of ballast water discharged. However, the State has continued to delay implementation of its requirement that vessel owner/operators install BWMS that meet these standards because no BWMS are available that meet California's treatment standards. In the CSLC staff's words: More specifically, shipboard ballast water treatment systems cannot be considered available to meet the California performance standards because: 1) no ballast water treatment system has demonstrated efficacy for all of the California performance standards based on the best available data, 2) there are no suitable methods/technology to analyze ballast water samples to determine treatment system efficacy for some of the California performance standards, and 3) a lack of sampling/compliance protocols precludes the ability of the Commission to make a conclusive determination about the availability of shipboard ballast water treatment systems to meet the California performance standards.

In all, 25 States have certified the VGP subject to additional requirements. The compliance challenges posed by this situation are staggering. As an example, a commercial vessel owner/operator transiting the full length of the Mississippi River is required to comply not only with applicable Coast Guard requirements under NANPCA/NISA and the EPA's VGP requirements, but also with varying additional VGP permit requirements imposed by the States of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, and Arkansas. This confusing array of requirements

will only continue to grow, confusing vessel owner/operators seeking in good faith to comply, confounding law enforcement authorities, unnecessarily impeding maritime commerce, and, most importantly, diminishing the overall effectiveness of U.S. efforts to combat aquatic invasive species. Strong, uniform national standards are necessary to effectively defend against invasive species brought to the United States in ballast water. The Vessel Incidental Discharge Act would require the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating (Secretary), in consultation with the Administrator of the EPA (Administrator), to establish and implement enforceable, uniform, national standards and requirements for the regulation of ballast water discharges and other discharges incidental to the normal operation of vessels. The new standards and requirements would be required to be based upon the best available technology economically achievable, and would generally supersede the current jumble of Federal and State incidental discharge requirements. However, States would retain authority to enforce the new requirements in their waters.—Minority Staff, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. SULLIVAN. This document has myths versus facts on what people are saying that this bill could do, and then it gives you the facts. I am not going to read each one, but if we have to have a debate on it, I certainly will read each one. It is really important to see this wasn't created by Senator WICKER or me. If you look at the author of this, it was the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation—our committee—written by the minority staff. What does that mean?

This is a Democratic staff under the minority and the Ranking Member on the committee saying that all the things you are hearing about how this is going to be bad are not true. Those are myths. These are the facts. These are our Democratic colleagues rebutting some of the people now looking to maybe not vote for this.

I ask all of my colleagues who are on the fence to take a look at this really well-produced myths-versus-facts sheet that was produced by our Democratic colleagues on the Commerce Committee because, again, it goes to what Senator WICKER was talking about—that this is a very strong bipartisan bill that we have been working on for months or really years. This has passed out of committee, I think, six different times with strong bipartisan support, including when the Democrats were chairing the committee.

I want to say to all of my colleagues that it is not just what is in this bill on the VIDA provision, or the discharge provision.

The bill is about the Coast Guard, the men and women serving in the Coast Guard. Every year, as I mentioned, we pass the NDAA, which is great—Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines—but we always forget about the Coast Guard, and we shouldn't be doing that. They are heroic young men and women. We can send a bipartisan signal today that we care about them. We are recognizing the heroic work you do for this country and the lives you save every day. We have your back.

I urge all of my colleagues, particularly my colleagues who know this issue, who have voted for this bill to come out of committee many times—there are well over 60 of us—to vote yes on this important bill when it comes to the floor in a few minutes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I rise today with my colleagues in advance of today's Congressional Review Act vote. I want to be clear about something. We are here today for a CRA vote, or a Congressional Review Act vote, that is on agency guidance—not a rule but an agency guidance from 2013—that seeks to protect consumers from discrimination.

CRAs are rule rollbacks. They are rolling back rules. They are not, though, meant to apply to years-old guidance from Federal agencies.

Today's vote is actually a radical departure of longstanding norms and statutory interpretation that will change the scope of the Congressional Review Act. What, then, could possibly be so important and so urgent that today we would break from longstanding tradition and demand a vote on something that could set an entirely new precedent for this body?

What is the guidance—not rule—that the Trump administration and Republican leadership of this body are going so far out of their way to undo? What this guidance does, very simply and very clearly, is to try to prevent discrimination in purchasing.

In 2013, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau put this guidance in place in response to, unfortunately, widespread and well-documented persistent discrimination against Americans of color when financing the purchase of a car. The guidance did nothing more than remind indirect auto lenders that they were liable under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act for pricing disparities caused by markup in compensation policies. It offered concrete steps to those auto dealers that they could use to ensure compliance and support for fair lending.

Auto lending is the third most common source of debt for all Americans. We know that the way the established financing model works too often leaves space for implicit racial bias and leaves space for discrimination against Americans of color.

We know from studies that Americans of color who have better credit and who go in to try to purchase and finance a car, compared to White Americans with worse credit, will often get higher interest rates and worse terms on their loans set by auto dealers. In fact, in one specific study conducted by the National Fair Housing Alliance, they paired White Americans and people of color to visit auto dealerships and shop for the same car within 24 hours of each other. Unfortunately, and surprisingly—or maybe not to some—in most cases the applicant who

was a person of color, despite having better credit and less debt, was offered higher cost financing options than the less-qualified White applicant. This is a practice that no one can support. This is a practice that most Americans think is outrageous. It is clearly wrong, and we should address it.

But we also know that, unfortunately, this kind of discrimination isn't unique to the auto industry. There are many areas of American lives where people of color, under the same circumstances, are often paying more. We know that implicit racial bias exists across sectors and industries and is a persistent issue causing people of color to have higher costs of living and to pay more.

Take the three largest lending markets: mortgages, student loans, and auto loans. We know discrimination persists in mortgage lending. A recent report by the Center for Investigative Reporting analyzed 31 million mortgage records from 2015 and 2016—just a couple of years ago. They found that people of color were much more likely to be denied a conventional mortgage than White applicants, even after controlling for economic and social factors, including applicants' income, the size of the loan they sought, and the neighborhood where they wanted to buy.

Look at student loans. For-profit colleges disproportionately enroll students of color and saddle them often with unaffordable student loans, while offering little in the way of value in exchange.

Look at payday loans. Study after study shows that payday lenders concentrate themselves in communities of color where they prey upon financially distressed, low-income people and make a bad financial situation markedly worse.

In 2018 we should all agree that we should be doing everything we can to protect against this kind of discrimination. When you test, time and again, better qualified loan applicants walking in and, within 24 hours, less qualified applicants walking in, as well, and they get the better loan deal, the only difference is the color of their skin. This is unacceptable in an America that believes in fairness.

We should, in a very light touch, do something about that. That is what this advice did. This advisory simply said: Hey, auto lenders, here are some steps you can take to address this issue.

The study I referenced of sending in a Black couple followed by a White couple is something that hits home for me very personally. My family, in the 1960s, was part of a similar situation. In this case, it was buying the home that I grew up in. In 1969, just 1 year after the passage of the Fair Housing Act, when my parents were trying to find a home in New Jersey, they encountered an illegal practice known as real estate steering, or trying to keep Black families like mine out of White

neighborhoods. Their bids on homes were routinely rejected in favor of White couples.

Eventually, my parents went to seek the help of a group of housing activists—volunteer lawyers, Black folks, White folks, Christian folks, Jewish folks—all part of a group in New Jersey called the Fair Housing Council. Together, they set up a sting operation where my parents went in and they were told, unfortunately, that the house they were looking at that they loved was no longer for sale. Then a volunteer White couple came right behind them and put an offer on the house, and it was accepted. Papers were drawn up. Then, on the day of the closing, the White couple didn't show up; my dad and his lawyer did. The real estate agent knew what he was doing was illegal.

First, he didn't accept it. He actually got angry. In fact, he got up and punched my dad's lawyer in the face and sicced the dog on my dad. A melee broke out. At the end, he was pleading with my father not to move into the neighborhood. He said crazy things like: Your people will not be happy here. Now, this is saying that the neighborhood didn't have things like "my people," but in this country, we are all one people, one Nation, united, and indivisible. There shouldn't be different rules, different laws, and different treatment based on the color of our skin. I can't believe we are talking about this in 2018.

My family, thank God, moved into that house. I grew up in that hometown—a nurturing community, an incredible community that welcomed me and nurtured my brother and me. I am here today because of that kind of activism and people willing to stand up and say something basic and simple: You should not discriminate on the basis of the color of someone's skin.

Part of the reason I grew up where I was is because there was a law that was on my family's side and passed by this body—the Fair Housing Act. I am proud that for years, we Republicans and Democrats have stood up for this basic principle, this basic ideal. An even bigger part of the success of my family and my life is because there were people who didn't just celebrate the passage of a law, didn't just say their work was done, but they remained vigilant, active, and attentive in making sure the law was made real and practiced. They knew protecting America's civil rights was not a one-and-done endeavor but required constant vigilance.

The fact is, we have so much work left to do in this country that it is frustrating. We have a lot of work to do controlling the impact of implicit racial bias. We have people—courageous police officers, courageous activists, and police leadership—talking about the presence of implicit racial bias. I have been pleased that even Republican judges who are nominated, whom I get to interview on the Judiciary Com-

mittee, speak to the presence of implicit racial bias in the criminal justice system that often results with people who are charged with a crime, the same circumstances, getting longer sentences just because of the color of their skin.

This is not a partisan issue. This is us working against these issues and these factors of American life and making sure the basic ideal of fairness in American society is upheld. Outside of this body, American people know how implicit racial bias seeps into our criminal justice system, into our workplaces, and into our schools. The question is, What are we going to do about it? Why are we today going out of our way, possibly creating an entirely new congressional precedent, changing advisories into rules that can then be rolled back—why are we doing this on this issue, to roll back guidance that reflects something most of us should be able to agree on?

When an American goes in to buy a car and gets that car financed, the loan terms they get should be based on their creditworthiness—the amount of debt they have—not the color of their skin.

When we have comprehensive studies, empirical tests of literally sending in couples to go buy cars, why are we rolling back guidance that gives suggestions to auto dealers about how to control this? Why would this body, with the history of trying to address racial injustice, roll back a rule that is trying to address and control this practice in auto lending?

If you live in communities like mine, having to pay hundreds extra or \$1,000 extra for a car, in a family making \$20,000 or \$30,000 a year, struggling for that moment that we all know, when you get your car, you get your keys, why should they have to pay more and have it impact on their home, their well-being, their finances, their college savings, and their ability to pay their mortgage? It is unfair. Based on what? Their skin color.

Rolling back this guidance has nothing to do with trimming bureaucracy. It is guidance. It will not help consumers. It will not help Americans of color. It will not help the ideals we swear an oath to—justice for all—and it is certainly not going to help our country to just be a place where working stiffs can get a fair shot at things we think of as the American dream: owning your home, sending your kids to college, and having a car.

At a time when the rest of the country seems to be paying closer attention to issues of discrimination, when we see anti-Semitism on the rise, greater attacks on Muslim Americans, at a time when we are looking at racial issues, why are we doing this now or at any time?

By passing this measure, we will be sending a message to millions of Americans that this body isn't just willfully out of touch but that we are going out of our way to create an environment where this practice is going to thrive,

where the practice and the perpetration of discrimination against Americans of color persists in our country.

We should be beyond this. This is a chance, today, where we can make a difference. It may not seem big. We can send a message that these kinds of practices will not be tolerated. We can send a message that every American matters to this body. We can send a message that discrimination and prejudice, implicit or not, will not be tolerated on this soil.

I ask my colleagues, I beseech my colleagues, in the name of an American who is here today because of the Fair Housing Act, because of tests like this, where White couples have said—Black couples have said, "I am here because of this history," why would we turn our backs on that kind of progress and not stand up for basic American fairness?

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SUL-LIVAN). The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, before the Senator from New Jersey leaves the floor, I want to say, this Senator has run into few people who are as articulate and passionate to represent the least among us in our country. I want the Senator from New Jersey to know how grateful I am for his advocacy, for his determination, for his civility, for his passion, and for his heart.

I thank the Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. I thank the Senator. I thank him for modeling that very character to me every day that I serve with him.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, before this sounds like an admiration society, I will say it is genuinely felt.

NOMINATION OF JAMES BRIDENSTINE

Mr. President, what I want to do is talk about the leadership of our civilian space program. Traditionally, the NASA administrator has been well qualified and is not controversial.

NASA is one of the few remaining areas that has largely avoided the bitter partisanship that has invaded far too many areas of government in our society today—until now.

The NASA nominee, Congressman BRIDENSTINE, was nominated to head NASA last fall. His hearing in the Senate Commerce Committee was among the most contentious I have ever been a part of. He was voted out of the committee on party lines, and Senators on both sides of the aisle have expressed doubts, both publicly and privately, to me on his qualifications for the job.

The NASA Administrator should be a consummate space professional. That is what this Senator wants, a space professional, not a politician, as the head of NASA. That space professional ought to be technically and scientifically competent and a skilled executive. More importantly, the Administrator must be a leader who has the ability to bring us together, to unite scientists, engineers, commercial space

interests, policymakers, and the public on a shared vision for future space exploration.

As you know, our goal is going to Mars in the decade of the 2030s. We set the goal first with the Obama administration and now with the Trump administration. What pains me is, I believe the one who has been nominated to head this not partisan, not bipartisan—NASA has always been non-partisan—agency, I am afraid we are hitting a different standard.

My concern comes from having witnessed very directly the tragic consequence when NASA leadership has failed us.

When it comes to the ultimate frontier of space, there are always going to be risks involved, but the NASA Administrator bears the responsibility, accountability, and the final decision for the lives of astronauts who explore the heavens on behalf of all of us.

I have personally witnessed—in both the Challenger and the Columbia accidents, we learned that engineers at NASA knew of the dangers and tried to sound the alarm, but NASA's management and its structure, while well-intentioned in both of those tragedies, filtered out debate and dissent, and the warnings of the engineers went unheeded with heartbreaking consequences. And so it was, in 1986, with the launch of the Challenger—10 days after this Senator had returned on the 24th flight of the space shuttle to Earth—there was the tragic consequence. Even the engineers out in Provo, UT, who were engineers on the solid rocket boosters, were begging their management the night before the launch to stop the count when they saw on NASA TV the icicles hanging on the launch tower.

We learned later in the investigation, knowing as we now know, that they had received back the solid rocket boosters from previous flights in January, where they saw blow-by of the hot gases past the field joints that were supposed to be sealed with the rubberized gaskets, called O rings, but because of the cold weather, they stiffened and did not seal the field joint, and the hot gases escaped. As the Challenger was traveling into the Florida sky, it hit right at the external tank, punctured the tank, and the crew was lost.

So, too, engineers in 2003 and before and crew members—like one of the best of the best, CAPT Robert Gibson, U.S. Navy, Retired, five-time shuttle astronaut, four-time commander—had pointed out after each flight, examining the orbiter, that it looked as though it had been shredded. In his words: It was as if you had taken a shotgun out and just shot buckshot into the delicate silicon tile. As a result, on launch, on ascent, pieces of the foam of the external tank were falling off and hitting the delicate silicon tiles of the space shuttle orbiter.

Of course, on that fateful day in early February of 2003, that is exactly

what happened. A chunk of the insulation foam just about the size of an insulated cooler, on ascent, as the orbiter is accelerating, falls in the acceleration and hits the carbon-carbon fiber of the leading edge of the left wing and knocks a hole in it.

Of course, on ascent to orbit, there is no problem; on orbit, there is no problem. The problem comes after the deorbit burn and after the space shuttle falls for 30 minutes through the vacuum of space and then starts encountering the molecules of air in the upper atmosphere. As those upper atmosphere air molecules hit the underside of the space shuttle, the nose of the space shuttle, and the leading edges of the wing, the temperatures grow to over 3,000 degrees Fahrenheit, and there is a big hole in the leading edge of the left wing. Of course, the left wing burns up, and the crew is destroyed high in the descent over east Texas.

NASA's management structure, well-intentioned, filtered out debate and dissent, did not listen to those astronaut commanders like Hoot Gibson, and did not listen years earlier, in 1985 and 1986, to those engineers at Morton Thiokol. The result is the loss of 2 space shuttles and 14 souls, including on the Space Shuttle *Columbia* in 2003, the first Israeli astronaut, Ilan Ramon.

In the aftermath of *Columbia*, NASA was reorganized so that safety concerns from engineering and safety personnel are not squashed like they were, but instead elevated—ultimately, to whom? To the guy at the top, the NASA Administrator. To make those decisions, the Administrator must draw on all of his or her knowledge of the engineering principles and of space flight, all of his or her experience from managing large technical organizations, and every bit of judgment, reason, and impartiality he or she can muster.

Leading NASA is a job for an experienced and proven space professional. The success or failure of leadership at NASA is, quite literally, a matter of life and death.

I commend Congressman BRIDENSTINE's time as a pilot, and his service to our country in the military is commendable. But it does not qualify him to make the complex and nuanced engineering, safety, and budgetary decisions for which the head of NASA has to be accountable.

Furthermore, Congressman BRIDENSTINE's recent public service career does not instill great confidence about his ability to bring people together. His record of behavior in Congress is as divisive as any in Washington, including his attacks on Members of this body from his own party. It is hard to see how that record will endear him—and, by extension, NASA—to Congress and, most importantly, endear him to the American people.

Finally, given NASA's mission to study the Earth—that is one of NASA's missions—Congressman BRIDENSTINE's

past statements on climate change are troubling, to say the least. Particularly in this administration where words like “science-based” and “climate change” are being scrubbed from government documents and where some scientists have been restricted from speaking publicly about scientific findings, NASA needs an Administrator—a leader, a strong leader—who understands the critical importance of studying the Earth and is willing to put his job on the line to protect NASA's scientists. Congressman BRIDENSTINE's record suggests that he will do otherwise.

I don't come to this decision lightly. I hold nothing against him personally. He is a very likable fellow. My decision is not politically motivated. In fact, I supported the nomination of Chief Financial Officer Jeff DeWit because he was qualified for the job as Chief Financial Officer, and he was confirmed without a problem and is in that job. Of course, if Congressman BRIDENSTINE is, in fact, confirmed, I will work with him for the good of our Nation's space program.

My opposition to this nomination comes from decades of experience and an understanding of NASA's history and having lived through some of its darkest moments.

I have no doubt that the nominee is passionate about our space program, and I don't doubt his motivation or his intentions. What is not right for NASA is an Administrator who is politically divisive and who is not prepared to be the last in line to make that fateful decision on go or no-go for launch. Therefore, I will oppose this nominee.

I yield the floor.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise today to voice my strong support for the nomination of Congressman JAMES “JIM” BRIDENSTINE to be the next NASA Administrator. On November 1, 2017, the Senate Commerce, Science, & Transportation Committee, which I chair, held a confirmation hearing for Congressman BRIDENSTINE's nomination and reported his nomination favorably on November 8, 2017, and again on January 18, 2018.

So far, it has been 1 year and nearly 3 months since this important agency has had a Senate-confirmed Administrator. What is more, NASA's Acting Administrator, Robert Lightfoot, will retire at the end of this month. Congressman BRIDENSTINE's vision, experience, and passion for NASA's vital mission are unquestionable, and I believe that his leadership will not only serve the agency well, but that his confirmation will give NASA the leadership it deserves.

Congressman BRIDENSTINE has an extensive record of both military and public service. In 1998, he began his distinguished military career serving as an aviator in the U.S. Navy. As an Active Duty pilot in the Navy, he flew the E-2C Hawkeye off the USS *Abraham Lincoln* aircraft carrier and deployed for multiple combat missions in Iraq

and Afghanistan. While still on Active Duty, he transitioned to the F-18 Hornet and flew as an "aggressor" at the Naval Strike and Air Warfare "Top Gun" Center.

After leaving Active Duty in 2007, Congressman BRIDENSTINE returned to Tulsa, OK. He continued his military service in the Navy Reserve, flying counterdrug missions in Central and South America. He is currently a member of the 137th Special Operations Wing of the Oklahoma Air National Guard, where he serves at the rank of major.

In 2012, he was elected to the House of Representatives to represent Oklahoma's First Congressional District.

He currently serves on both the House Armed Services Committee and the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, where he has distinguished himself as a leader on space policy.

In spite of Congressman BRIDENSTINE's exceptional military and public service, some of my colleagues have expressed concerns about his nomination.

With regard to these concerns, I would note that the Commerce, Science, & Transportation Committee has received significant bipartisan support from the space community for Congressman BRIDENSTINE's nomination. In fact, over 50 space-related leaders and organizations have submitted letters of support, including Democratic Congressman PERLMUTTER, former NASA Administrator Sean O'Keefe, and astronaut Buzz Aldrin.

Beyond the support of this diverse group of stakeholders in the space community, Congressman BRIDENSTINE also enjoys the support of his colleagues in the House. On March 20, 2018, more than 60 Members of the House of Representatives, both Republicans and Democrats, signed a letter to Senate leadership requesting that Congressman BRIDENSTINE's nomination move forward in the Senate.

The endorsement of so many stakeholders in the space community and the endorsement of Congressman BRIDENSTINE's colleagues are reflective of the truly bipartisan nature of what Congressman BRIDENSTINE would like to accomplish at NASA. Because of this, I am confident that Congressman BRIDENSTINE's leadership would serve NASA well.

I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I once again rise to express my strong support for the Coast Guard reauthorization bill and the Vessel Incident Discharge Act, which is contained within it. I also wish to thank the, literally, dozens and dozens and pages and pages of organizations that have come forward and said that this is an important piece of legislation for job creation and for those people who want to make a living on our waterways in this vital, vital aspect of our economy.

To pick up on something we were mentioning a few moments ago, not only does this legislation have the support of the chamber of commerce, business associations around the country, and job creation associations around the country, it has the support of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, the International Longshoremen's Association, the International Union of Operating Engineers, and Metal Trades AFL-CIO and Maritime Trades AFL-CIO. I could go on and on, pointing out that this legislation has the support of both labor and management.

I appreciate people of diverse political ideologies coming together on something that is going to make it easier to do commerce in the United States. I just hope we can get the 60 votes we require for consensus here in this body. I know we are close. We have 60 people who have, at one time or another, expressed support for this legislation, and I hope we can come together in a convergence in a few moments when we vote for this.

I want to discuss a couple of misconceptions that keep floating around about the ballast water, incidental water issue.

First, some people are saying that the bill lowers the environmental standards for ballast water. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. Why would these organizations come forward with this if we are going to lower the standards? The very language of the bill preserves current Federal standards. Also, the bill includes what is already in the law; that is, the Environmental Protection Agency will have a principal role in setting the national standard for ballast water discharge.

The new standards and requirements would be based upon a term of art, and the term of art in the language is "best available technology economically achievable," BATEA. This term comes straight out of our current Clean Water Act. It is already there. But in the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act—which we hope we can bring to the floor in a few moments—the best available technology would be mandated for this new, nationwide standard. This standard would, of course, be enforced by the Coast Guard, but it would be developed by the EPA according to the most stringent, scientifically available standards we could possibly have.

What we are trying to do in this regard is free up commerce—free up working men and women, free up people trying to create more jobs in the maritime industry—from complying with a myriad of different requirements as we go State to State to State. Some 25 different States have a little bit of a nuanced approach to this. As you can imagine, if you are in the barge business or in the maritime business, it is almost impossible to comply with 25 separate standards. This would set one standard across the country,

but it would be at the best available technology. So please, don't anyone think this is some sort of lesser technology. This is the best.

According to the very wording of the bill that we are asking the Senate to vote on today, EPA concurrence is required for these regulations to be established. It would not be able to be enforced unless EPA comes in and blesses it. And EPA would have a principal role in developing the proposed regulations.

Let me say a word or two about the Great Lakes. This seems to be a matter of concern and misunderstanding. There is a myth that this somehow harms the Great Lakes. I have to commend the principal author of this legislation and the Senator from Alaska, who is currently occupying the Chair, for being willing to accommodate our friends from the Great Lakes during this process. The Great Lakes gets a little extra treatment in this bill because of concerns they have raised.

Here is what will happen if we pass this bill. All vessels entering the Great Lakes will need to flush their ballast water before entering. The only ballast water then being discharged by Great Lakes vessels will be water that they have taken in from the Great Lakes. They have to flush their ballast tanks before coming in. That is an accommodation we have made to bring our friends from the Great Lakes into this issue. According to this bill, the Coast Guard, in concurrence with the EPA, would be required to establish best management practices specifically tailored to the Great Lakes.

I would just say to my friends, let's talk about the facts, but please don't make up arguments that are not based in fact. This legislation, if it passes—and I still think we have an opportunity to get 60 votes and move on to considering the substance—would use the best scientifically available enforcement possible. It would give our barge folks and our maritime folks just one thing to comply with rather than 25 or 26 or 27 different regulatory schemes. And what do those myriad of schemes do? Every time you have to hire a lawyer or a compliance person, it is money you take out of your bottom line that you would like to use creating a job in America. That is what these people want to do. They want to increase employment for these boiler-makers and longshoremen who have endorsed this bill.

I say to my friends, let's not be confused with arguments that have come in in the last week or two that have no basis in fact. This is a bill about strong, strong requirements for the water that, incidentally, has to come out of the ballast tanks, and it is about strong enforcement by the Coast Guard of standards imposed by the EPA according to the best available scientific technology—strong requirements to protect our environment but also to protect jobs and commerce for Americans.

I think we are going to vote in 10 or 11 minutes. I urge my colleagues who have at one time or the other come forward and endorsed this very proposal, please stay with us on this, particularly based on the accommodations the Senator from Alaska has made to make the bill more accommodating and more conclusive of the concerns that have been raised. I urge a "yes" vote.

We are going to continue this fight one way or another. This is a day we ought to stand for doing something for commerce, for labor, for business, and in the name of bipartisanship and in the name of rewarding the way we ought to be legislating on the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in a few minutes, at noon, the Senate will begin the process of voting—two votes. The first of those votes will be a vote on a resolution brought to the Senate by Senator MORAN and Senator TOOMEY to reject a rule proposed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's 2013 action in which it sought to assert jurisdiction over auto finance guidance. I use the word "rule" guardedly, though, because, as you will see from my remarks, this was an end run by the CFPB in two ways. First, the CFPB doesn't have jurisdiction over auto finance. Second, the CFPB did not use the Administrative Procedure Act to adopt a rule; it sought to implement a rule through a process of issuing a guidance to avoid the scrutiny and the legal challenges to its effort to assert this jurisdiction.

It is important that Congress disapprove this guidance because it was an attempt by the CFPB to make substantive policy changes through guidance rather than through the rule-making process governed by the Administrative Procedure Act. As I said before, it is also an attempt to regulate auto dealers, who were explicitly exempted from CFPB supervision and regulation under the Dodd-Frank act. Finally, it is also a rule that has caused great difficulty and problems in the marketplace, hurting auto dealers and consumers alike.

The CFPB itself, when undertaking this action, admitted what it was doing. The CFPB rejected developing a rule using its statutory authority because the actions it was seeking to regulate are ostensibly those of dealers over whom it has no regulatory authority. It is interesting that even in the CFPB's own documentation of what it was doing, it indicated that it didn't have the authority to do it. So the CFPB decided to develop a guidance, rather than a rule, as a backdoor way to regulate auto dealers.

The CFPB's indirect auto bulletin represents a departure from typical Federal agency practice, as reflected in the GAO's conclusion that its rule is subject to CRA requirements. In other words, in a ruling, the GAO said: Yes, this actually is a rule even though the

Administrative Procedure Act wasn't followed. That decision by the GAO gives this Congress the authority to reject the CFPB's actions.

Some of my colleagues on the other side say that disapproving guidance is somehow a loophole we are using because we should only have authority to disapprove a specific rule. The GAO's ruling on the CFPB's guidance clearly puts this within the jurisdiction of this Senate.

I would point my colleagues to a statement from, among others, Senator Reid in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD from 1996 when the Congressional Review Act was passed, explaining what the authors' intent was when passing this legislation. He said: "[T]he authors are concerned that some agencies have attempted to circumvent notice-and-comment requirements by trying to give legal effect to general statements of policy, 'guidelines,' and agency policy and procedure manuals. The authors admonish the agencies that the APA's broad definition of 'rule' was adopted by the authors of this legislation to discourage circumvention of the requirements" of it.

As a result of these significant concerns, this resolution has attracted substantial support, including from 14 different organizations involved with helping consumers buy a vehicle, and an endorsement via a Statement of Administration Policy from the White House. The following organizations submitted letters: the Chamber of Commerce, the Credit Union National Association, the Independent Community Bankers of America, the American Bankers Association, the American Financial Services Association, the National Automobile Dealers Association, the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, the National RV Dealers Association, the National Independent Automobile Dealers Association, the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association, the American International Automobile Dealers Association, the National Auto Auction Association, the Motorcycle Industry Council, and the National Federation of Independent Business.

Finally, I would like to respond to the assertion that disapproving this guidance somehow allows auto dealers to discriminate. That is the issue that is at stake here. The reason that Congress did not give the CFPB jurisdiction over auto dealers is that the auto dealers are already subject to the Equal Credit Opportunity Act. If we reject this resolution, the auto dealers will continue to be subject to the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, which will continue to apply to all creditors, which means auto dealers who extend credit will be prohibited from discriminating against customers on the basis of race, sex, age, national origin, marital status, or because one receives public assistance.

In other words, we are not changing the law. We are not taking away any protections in the law. We are stopping

a rogue agency from continuing to be able to enforce a rule which it sought to create by avoiding the Administrative Procedure Act.

I urge my colleagues to vote to support this resolution.

Mr. President, I yield my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be 5 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to the second vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to start the first vote immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 76 Leg.]

YEAS—51

Alexander	Flake	Murkowski
Barrasso	Gardner	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Perdue
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Capito	Heller	Roberts
Cassidy	Hoever	Rounds
Collins	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Corker	Inhofe	Sasse
Cornyn	Isakson	Scott
Cotton	Johnson	Shelby
Crapo	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cruz	Lankford	Thune
Daines	Lee	Tillis
Enzi	Manchin	Toomey
Ernst	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	Young

NAYS—47

Baldwin	Blumenthal	Brown
Bennet	Booker	Cantwell

Cardin	Jones	Sanders
Carper	Kaine	Schatz
Casey	King	Schumer
Coons	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Smith
Donnelly	Markey	Stabenow
Durbin	McCaskill	Tester
Feinstein	Menendez	Udall
Gillibrand	Merkley	Van Hollen
Harris	Murphy	Warner
Hassan	Murray	Warren
Heinrich	Nelson	Whitehouse
Heitkamp	Peters	Wyden
Hirono	Reed	

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth McCain

The joint resolution (S.J. Res. 57) was passed, as follows:

S.J. RES. 57

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to “Indirect Auto Lending and Compliance with the Equal Credit Opportunity Act” (CFPB Bulletin 2013-02 (March 21, 2013), and printed in the Congressional Record on December 6, 2017, on pages S7888–S7889, along with a letter of opinion from the Government Accountability Office dated December 5, 2017, that the Bulletin is a rule under the Congressional Review Act), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 5 minutes equally divided before the next vote.

The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Thank you, Madam President and colleagues.

The next vote will be on cloture on a motion to concur with an amendment that is the Coast Guard reauthorization, but with a special provision that I want to draw all my colleagues' attention to, dealing with incidental discharges from vessels.

I am strongly supportive of the Coast Guard reauthorization, but this VIDA provision, as it is known, is extremely troublesome. It impacts both freshwater coasts of the Great Lakes as well as our other coastal regions, and it strips the Environmental Protection Agency of its scientific role in setting standards for discharges and puts the Coast Guard entirely in charge of these decisions and enforcement.

In addition, it strips all of our coastal States of the authority to pass laws concerning the waters off their coasts. Wisconsin is a State that has passed its own water discharge rules. It has done so because we need to protect the greatest fresh drinking water source in the world and in our Nation.

We also have had threats of invasive species that would decimate our Great Lakes. Ballast water and incidental discharges can often be the cause of those invasive species. In addition, there are chemicals that can enter the water if this is not regulated. This is not the time for a one-size-fits-all approach.

We should remove the VIDA provision from the Coast Guard reauthorization, pass the Coast Guard reauthorization on a voice vote because it is absolutely not controversial, and then get to the hard work of doing VIDA the right way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, the title that our colleagues are complaining about in this bill—the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act, or VIDA—has been introduced in the last five Congresses since 2008, several times being led by Democrats.

There have been numerous hearings, meetings, and protracted negotiations regarding VIDA, spanning days, weeks, months, and years. The bill has been passed out of the Commerce Committee two times this year and multiple times in the past always by voice vote.

There are 23 cosponsors, including many from the other side of the aisle—Senators CASEY, NELSON, SCHATZ, MCCASKILL, COONS, and SHAHEEN this year. Other cosponsors of similar past VIDA bills include Senators HIRONO, MARKEY, PRYOR, WARREN, COONS, MANCHIN, and Hagan. There have been negotiations with committee members and people off the committee. We have accommodated and accommodated and accommodated so much—I have bent over backward so many times that I can't hardly stand up straight—trying to accommodate concerns that people have on this.

Many of the folks speaking against VIDA have been in those negotiations, very honestly. Some of the friends across the aisle have extracted concession after concession, only to move the goalpost whenever we get close.

Here is a list of some of the changes we have agreed to: State incidental discharge standards remain in place until promulgation of a final Coast Guard rule, allowing at least 2 years during which all the current standards remain in place. Both ballast water and incidental discharge rules will be developed by the Coast Guard in concurrence with the EPA. We respect the EPA's good work in this area and fully anticipate that the Agency will be closely involved every step of the way. States will have the authority to enforce the Federal regulations regarding ballast water and incidental discharges. States will have the authority to require that vessel operators provide ballast water compliance information prior to arrival at a port. States will have the ability to charge existing and new fees for ballast water and incidental discharge inspections.

Madam President, this was a bipartisan bill when it was introduced, and since, we have made numerous changes to accommodate concerns. VIDA preserves environmental protections and allows commerce to move. It has gone through extraordinary debate, process, and input from both sides of the aisle. It is time to pass this bill now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to accompany S. 140, an act to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund, with a further amendment.

Mitch McConnell, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, Johnny Isakson, Todd Young, Tom Cotton, Tim Scott, Roger F. Wicker, Cory Gardner, John Thune, Jerry Moran, John Hoeven, Lamar Alexander, Pat Roberts, Mike Crapo, Jeff Flake, John Boozman.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 140, with amendment No. 2232, offered by the Senator from Kentucky, Mr. MCCONNELL, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 56, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 77 Leg.]

YEAS—56

Alexander	Flake	Murkowski
Barrasso	Gardner	Nelson
Blunt	Graham	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Perdue
Burr	Hatch	Portman
Capito	Heitkamp	Risch
Casey	Heller	Roberts
Cassidy	Hoeven	Rounds
Collins	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Corker	Inhofe	Sasse
Cornyn	Isakson	Scott
Cotton	Johnson	Shelby
Crapo	Jones	Sullivan
Cruz	Kennedy	Thune
Daines	Lankford	Tillis
Donnelly	Lee	Toomey
Enzi	Manchin	Wicker
Ernst	McCaskill	Young
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—42

Baldwin	Feinstein	McConnell
Bennet	Gillibrand	Menendez
Blumenthal	Harris	Merkley
Booker	Hassan	Murphy
Brown	Heinrich	Murray
Cantwell	Hirono	Peters
Cardin	Kaine	Reed
Carper	King	Sanders
Coons	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Schumer
Durbin	Markey	Shaheen

Smith
Stabenow
Tester

Udall
Van Hollen
Warner

Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

Rounds
Rubio
Sasse
Scott

Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis

Toomey
Wicker
Young

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth

McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 56, the nays 42.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I enter a motion to reconsider the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of JAMES BRIDENSTINE, of Oklahoma, to be Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Mitch McConnell, John Hoeven, Johnny Isakson, James Lankford, Steve Daines, Mike Crapo, John Kennedy, John Barrasso, John Thune, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, James M. Inhofe, Richard Burr, Mike Rounds, Shelley Moore Capito, Tom Cotton, Cory Gardner.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of JAMES BRIDENSTINE, of Oklahoma, to be Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 78 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Alexander
Barrasso
Blunt
Boozman
Burr
Capito
Cassidy
Collins
Corker
Cornyn
Cotton
Crapo
Cruz

Daines
Enzi
Ernst
Fischer
Flake
Gardner
Graham
Grassley
Hatch
Heller
Hoeven
Hyde-Smith
Inhofe

Isakson
Johnson
Kennedy
Lankford
Lee
McConnell
Moran
Murkowski
Paul
Perdue
Portman
Risch
Roberts

Baldwin
Bennet
Blumenthal
Booker
Brown
Cantwell
Cardin
Carper
Casey
Coons
Cortez Masto
Donnelly
Durbin
Feinstein
Gillibrand
Harris

NAYS—48

Hassan
Heinrich
Heitkamp
Hirono
Jones
Kaine
King
Klobuchar
Leahy
Manchin
Markey
McCaskill
Menendez
Merkley
Murphy
Murray

Nelson
Peters
Reed
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Smith
Stabenow
Tester
Udall
Van Hollen
Warner
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth

McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 48.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of JAMES BRIDENSTINE, of Oklahoma, to be Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

NOMINATION OF CARLOS MUNIZ

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, later this afternoon, the Senate will finally vote to confirm Carlos Muniz—a well-qualified nominee—to be general counsel at the U.S. Department of Education.

I came to the floor last week to ask for this vote because I believe Mr. Muniz has been subject to unreasonable delays. For example, Mr. Muniz was nominated by the President on June 6th of last year—316 days ago. He has been pending on the floor since we reported him out of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee on October 18, 2017—182 days ago. In other words, he has been waiting for 6 months, following his approval by the relevant committee, for the Senate to consider this nomination. So it is time to confirm him. It is time to give Secretary DeVos an attorney and a general counsel.

Mr. Muniz has extensive experience as an attorney and in government. From January 2014 to February 2018, he was a partner at the law firm of McGuireWoods in Florida.

Prior to that, from January 2011 to 2014, he was Deputy Attorney General for the State of Florida and Chief of Staff to Attorney General Pam Bondi. There, he managed a 400-lawyer agency and oversaw all functions, including litigation, policy development, legislative affairs, and communications. He was also General Counsel for Florida's Department of Financial Services and Deputy General Counsel for Governor Jeb Bush.

Mr. Muniz graduated from the University of Virginia with high honors. He earned his law degree from Yale, where he was an editor of the Yale Law Journal. After law school, he served as a law clerk to two Federal judges, one on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and the other for the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. In other words, he is exactly the kind of person that we hope would serve in public life.

I am delighted that he chose to accept the President's nomination and that we will have a chance this afternoon to confirm him.

As general counsel, he will have the important job of providing legal assistance to the Secretary concerning the programs and policies of the Department and making sure that these policies follow the law, which given his background, he has the experience to do.

He testified in his confirmation hearing that he is committed to advising the Secretary to follow the law as Congress wrote it.

I am glad we are having this vote today. I support his nomination. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Texas for his courtesy in allowing me to speak before him.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Carlos G. Muniz, of Florida, to be General Counsel, Department of Education.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 1 hour of debate on the nomination, equally divided between the Senator from New York or her designee and the Senator from Tennessee or his designee.

The majority whip.

REMEMBERING BARBARA BUSH

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, it is with sadness that I come to the Senate floor to speak about former First Lady Barbara Bush on her passing yesterday. Of course, she was the wife of our 41st President and the mother of our 43rd President.

My wife Sandy and I have wonderful memories of Mrs. Bush flying around the State of Texas with us during my campaign for attorney general. That the former First Lady of the United States was so willing to embark on this long day of campaigning speaks to her generosity and her devotion to causes she believed in. With her, we always felt like we were flying in first class.

Many kind things have already been said about the First Lady's sharp wit and her sense of humor, her efforts to improve child literacy, and her faith and loyalty to family and friends; and all of those are true. I will not try to top those statements. I will simply say what all of us are feeling today: sad

and a little bit emptier as a nation, missing her honor, dignity, and respectability.

NOMINATION OF MIKE POMPEO

Mr. President, later today I have the honor of meeting with the Director of the CIA, Mike Pompeo, who has been nominated by the President of the United States to become America's chief diplomat, the U.S. Secretary of State. I am looking forward to catching up with the Director about several global challenges and his priorities as the next Secretary of State.

What confounds me as I stand here today is that many of our Democratic colleagues have made his nomination a partisan wedge issue. Diplomacy, which is what the State Department does, is supposed to be about bringing people together, not driving them apart. But sowing discord is what some partisans seem content on doing when it comes to Director Pompeo's nomination, and it is a shame.

With the growing number of threats around the world, with heightened tension in North Korea and Syria, it is clear that we need an intelligent, qualified person in that position. It is time to put partisan politics aside and to confirm this nomination. There is no good reason why we shouldn't be able to do that. After all, the editorial board at the Washington Post argued persuasively that Director Pompeo should be confirmed. Fourteen Democrats supported him when the Senate voted last year to approve his nomination to lead the CIA.

Back then, our colleague, the senior Senator from Virginia, said that he believed Pompeo would be an "effective leader of the CIA at a time when the Agency is facing many challenges."

The junior Senator from Virginia added that Pompeo "has a keen understanding of the CIA's role" and was "knowledgeable about our Nation's cyber threats."

Those seem like pretty nice compliments and pretty accurate assessments to me.

But now some Democrats are saying they oppose Pompeo's nomination for the State Department. On what grounds? Is the CIA any less important a job than the State Department? To be for Director Pompeo as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and against him for Secretary of State seems to be unreconcilable.

Some have attempted to justify their opposition saying that he is somehow anti-diplomacy, but that claim is frankly false.

We just heard last night of the news of Director Pompeo's trip to North Korea. Two Democratic Senators from Connecticut praised the groundwork that was being laid, saying they were "glad" that preparations were being made for upcoming negotiations on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and that this is the sort of diplomatic effort on the part of Pompeo that is undoubtedly welcome.

I agree with those comments. It is important to make sure that we ex-

haust all efforts to a diplomatic resolution on the Korean Peninsula, rather than see an armed conflict with so many innocent lives lost and so much bloodshed. So I applaud Director Pompeo and this administration for taking the diplomatic avenue so seriously and making that trip, laying the groundwork for the President's negotiation with Kim Jong Un.

That raises the question: How possibly could Director Pompeo, in light of this news, be the warmongering, anti-diplomatic caricature that some Democrats have painted him to be? It is just not true. The Director's trip is not the only thing that established his diplomatic credibility.

I have spoken about Director Pompeo's credentials on several occasions in the past. As we know, he graduated first in his class at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, where he was an engineer. He served in the U.S. Army, earning the rank of captain, and he served as a cavalry officer in various parts of the world.

When he went to law school, he graduated at the top of his class and practiced at a prestigious law firm. Then he went into business, founding an aerospace company, and later ran for the House of Representatives from his home State in Kansas.

Those that know Mike know that "brash," "impulsive," and "reckless" are not words you would ever use to describe him. He is not somebody looking to pick a fight with dangerous regimes or to flex military muscle unnecessarily.

Actually, Director Pompeo is careful, thoughtful, and deliberate. He listens, he studies, and he gets along with people. Above all, he has the sort of experience we need in our next Secretary of State.

It is true that he has military experience, but that doesn't predispose him to military conflict as the best way to resolve our disputes with other countries—to the contrary. And he has much more than just that experience.

He served honorably on the House Intelligence Committee, and he has now served at the CIA for more than 1 year. So he has that vital intelligence background.

As I said, he worked in law and business. So he understands the role of civil society and public institutions and building the durable rule of law in countries unlike our own.

I hope our colleagues will remember these qualities in the days ahead, and I hope Director Pompeo will be confirmed on the floor in short order. It would be a grave mistake for this body to fail to confirm the next Secretary of State, particularly leading up to the important negotiations with regard to the nuclear weapons capacity of the North Korean regime. The likelihood that it could be resolved short of armed conflict should encourage all of us to continue to support those diplomatic efforts and to support Director Pompeo as the next diplomat in chief.

TAX REFORM

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to speak again about tax day, which, of course, was yesterday. I know so many Texans are saying: Thank goodness it is over.

We heard a collective groan across the country as people jumbled together all the paperwork and mailed their returns or delivered them to the IRS.

The good news is that the worst is behind us. As the majority leader wrote recently, there is "a silver lining—simply put, it is 'out with the old and in with the new.'"

Yesterday is the last time American families will have to file under the unfair, convoluted, and outdated Tax Code that Congress and the President got rid of a few months ago.

Unfortunately, none of our Democratic colleagues supported the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act—none. All of them voted no in lockstep. Every single Democrat in the House and every single Democrat in the Senate voted to block tax cuts for working families. They voted against doubling the standard deduction. They voted against doubling the child tax credit. They voted to maintain the U.S. corporate rate as the highest business tax rate in the industrialized world—all to our detriment and all to contribute to slow economic growth and a lack of hope for so many people looking for work and hoping to pursue their dreams.

Well, some of our colleagues yesterday met on the stairs out in front on the Capitol, and they said that not only did they vote no when it came to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, but now they want to repeal those tax cuts. That is right. They came together unanimously and said: We want to raise your taxes, killing the nascent economic recovery we have seen, which has gotten people so excited and has caused consumer confidence to be at an all-time high.

We have seen what has happened to the stock market and to people's 401(k)s, pensions, and retirement savings. People have a spring in their step once more when it comes to their job prospects and bringing home more take-home pay.

Our colleagues across the aisle voted against a \$2,000 tax cut for a family of four making \$73,000. They simply have ignored the fact that the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act doubled the standard deduction, making sure that for a married couple, their first \$24,000 of income earned was tax free. They ignored the fact that the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act doubled the child tax credit from \$1,000 to \$2,000, allowing many more parents to claim it and helping working families.

Our Democratic colleagues who voted no ignore the fact that the law eliminates the individual mandate tax, which disproportionately hits low-income families. Worst of all, our colleagues who insist on voting no to

these reforms seem so driven by ideology and by a devotion to big government that they aren't actually listening to the American people.

Well, I have listened to my constituents, and every time I do, I learn something new. Every week I hear from Texans who explain how they are putting the new savings from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act to good use.

One retired and disabled soldier named William Alderman says he lives on a fixed income and has seen it go up under the changes made to the Tax Code. He said he thinks the law will have "lasting impact," and he said "thank you." He said: "God bless Texas and America."

Another Texan, a retired Air Force colonel from Brownsville named David Teigen said the benefits sure felt like a lot more than just "crumbs" to him.

A third, Donnie Connell, from San Antonio, my hometown, said the tax law will result in close to \$4,000 worth of savings this year. Donnie is trying to make a better life for his family, and he called the reforms a "HUGE DEAL." When he said "HUGE DEAL," it was in all caps, I might add.

Our Democratic colleagues are so quick to dismiss or ignore normal, hard-working people like Donnie with the same old tired talking points and ideology because doing so is easier than actually doing the hard work of coming together on a bipartisan basis and passing legislation.

When they do this, they like to talk about corporations. According to their rationale, the 505 companies that have announced pay raises, bonuses, 401(k) match increases, cuts to utility rates, and other benefits aren't really helping the average worker; they are just somehow lining their own pockets. They seem to ignore that our old Tax Code ranked among the highest in the developed world and was an impediment to investment and the return of money earned abroad here to create new jobs and to build companies here so people could work and provide for their families and pursue their dreams. Instead, they say that stock buybacks, for example, which some companies have opted for, in part, reward corporate executives and well-off shareholders rather than workers.

The Senator from New York, the minority leader, has made those comments a number of times, which reflects a basic misunderstanding. Our colleague from Massachusetts has said that buybacks "create a sugar high for corporations." But none other than Warren Buffett—one of the most famous investors in the world and a Democrat—disagrees. He and others understand that it is oftentimes irresponsible for companies to sit on large amounts of cash. They need to put it to work for their shareholders, grow the business, improve stock values.

If companies buy back stock, shareholders can then go and invest the money in another company that might have had something better to do with

it, a company that has something greater to build or innovate and needs money to get the project off the ground. As one economist said, when it comes to buybacks, the money "doesn't go into a black hole. It goes into a financial market somewhere . . . [and then] a chain of events" leads to higher wages and higher productivity.

So as we hear and continue to spread the true stories about tax reform, let's remember men and women like Donnie Connell for whom the savings are literally a huge deal, and let's ignore the delusional, ideological arguments that have already been disproved. Let's keep finding ways to make the economy stronger and more dynamic, one characterized by more jobs, higher wages, and falling unemployment.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote on the Muniz nomination occur at 4:30 p.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to urge my colleagues to vote against the nomination of Carlos Muniz to be the Department of Education's general counsel.

The Department of Education's primary responsibility is to help schools educate our students and prepare them to be successful in life. A good education can open doors of opportunity for children who may not have thought that their dreams were possible, and a good education can lift millions of families out of poverty and into the middle class. That is certainly what a good education did for me and for my family.

As many working families are struggling today, we should be working to make sure every child can attend a good public school in their own neighborhood. We need to do more to ensure that every student who wants to attend college can afford it, graduate, and find a good-paying job and is not saddled with a mountain of debt. It is critical that every student, no matter what age, learn in a safe environment, free from discrimination, harassment, and violence.

This should be at the core of our Nation—that everyone has the right to a high-quality education, no matter where they live or how they learn or how much money their parents make.

As general counsel to the Department of Education, Mr. Muniz would be responsible for providing legal advice and assistance to Secretary DeVos. Her first year in office has shown how much she needs it.

Secretary DeVos continues to push her extreme privatization agenda even though millions of students, parents, and teachers have stood up and rejected it.

Despite bipartisan agreement in Congress on our Nation's K-12 law, the Every Student Succeeds Act, Secretary DeVos is approving State plans that do not comply with all of ESSA's guardrails—guardrails that were agreed to

by Republicans and Democrats in Congress to help ensure that no student falls through the cracks.

Secretary DeVos has rolled back protections for students and student loan borrowers, making it easier for predatory, for-profit colleges to take advantage of students.

Time and again, she has failed to uphold civil rights protections for students. She has tried to scale back the Office for Civil Rights, opened the doors for schools to once again discriminate against transgender students, and rolled back guidance for schools on how to investigate campus sexual assault. Especially in this moment when more and more women are coming forward and sharing their stories of harassment and assault, there is no excuse for those in power to attempt to sweep their stories under the rug. By rolling back this guidance, Secretary DeVos allowed schools to put the burden back on survivors. By making it harder for them to trust they will be believed, I am concerned that fewer women will come forward.

Mr. President, it is clear that Secretary DeVos needs an independent general counsel who will stand up to her when laws are being bent or broken. I am afraid Mr. Muniz has failed to convince me that is the kind of general counsel he would be.

He worked for a for-profit college company that preyed upon students and cheated them out of their education and their savings. He has a record of putting politics before students. He worked for the Florida attorney general, who came under fire for accepting a political donation from President Trump at the very time she decided against investigating Trump University—a sham university that defrauded countless students by promising them everything and leaving them with nothing.

Although Mr. Muniz and the Florida attorney general didn't stand up for students who were misled and defrauded by President Trump, many other States sued. Just last week—8 years after Trump University closed its doors—the \$25 million settlement the President agreed to pay to his victims was finalized, meaning some of those cheated by the President will now start seeing relief. However, Mr. Muniz's involvement in the Trump University case gives me great concern that at the Department of Education, he will once again not stand up for student loan borrowers defrauded by other predatory for-profit colleges.

I am afraid Mr. Muniz at the Department of Education will only be more of the same. For those reasons, I will be voting against his nomination, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

NOMINATION OF JAMES BRIDENSTINE

Mr. President, while I am here, I want to briefly comment on another nominee who is being considered today

by the Senate, and that is Representative BRIDENSTINE. Since he was nominated to be Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, I have been expressing very strong and very serious concerns, and I wanted to come to the floor today to once again call on my colleagues to reject this nomination and to call on President Trump to send us a nominee who is worthy of the great legacy and incredible potential of our civil space program.

My deep concerns with Representative BRIDENSTINE fall into two categories. The first is his fitness for leadership of an agency that is steeped in science, given his clear lack of understanding of basic scientific issues, and the second is his ability to lead an inclusive and forward-looking agency, given his history of hateful, demeaning, and divisive comments and positions.

First, let me talk about his fitness to lead this agency. NASA is an agency that is committed to science, exploration, technology, and innovation. Over the years, it has employed some of the most brilliant scientists in the world focused on the most cutting-edge research, with an eye toward exploring new frontiers, expanding human knowledge, and increasing our understanding of this world and beyond. It was this commitment to science and innovation that allowed NASA to catch up with the Russians and launch a satellite into space. It was this openness to innovation that allowed NASA to cast humanity's eyes with greater clarity than ever before far beyond our solar system with the launch of the Hubble telescope. It was this focus on innovation and exploration that allowed NASA to put a man on the Moon—12 of them, in fact. The list goes on.

Without a commitment to science, NASA would not have succeeded, and if that doesn't continue, it will fail. That is why I am very concerned that Representative BRIDENSTINE not only is not committed to science, he flat-out rejects clear scientific consensus. As I have said before, in a June 2013 speech he delivered on the floor of the House of Representatives, Representative BRIDENSTINE repeated the debunked claim that "global temperatures stopped rising 10 years ago," and a March 2013 tweet from him failed to recognize the difference between local weather conditions and the broader planetary climate. That is a basic scientific concept.

Those are just a couple of examples. This may be just one issue, but it is very telling. I believe that Representative BRIDENSTINE's failure to accept fundamental scientific truths about Earth's climate will make him an ill-suited and dangerous choice to lead an agency with science at its core.

Second is my concern about his ability to lead an inclusive and forward-looking agency, given his history of hateful, demeaning, and divisive comments and positions. I have noted this before, but it bears repeating.

Representative BRIDENSTINE has openly expressed his opposition to the rights of LGBTQ individuals, of immigrants, and of women. In May 2013, he gave a speech and suggested that LGBTQ people were immoral. He said: "Some of us in America still believe in the concept of sexual morality." In response to the Supreme Court's marriage equality ruling in 2013, he stated that he would keep fighting for "traditional marriage." Representative BRIDENSTINE has a history of supporting anti-Muslim groups and has consistently defended a number of President Trump's discriminatory policies on immigration, including the Muslim travel ban. He even defended President Trump's comments about sexually assaulting women, saying they were "locker room talk." He has gone on shows and stages to stand with bigots and racists—not to debate them but to agree with them. And that list goes on.

Representative BRIDENSTINE is not someone who should be put in charge of NASA's diverse workforce. In 2016, NASA announced that for the very first time, fully half of their new astronaut trainees were women. I mentioned before that NASA has sent 12 men to the Moon. Well, we may be on track for a woman to be the first American to plant her feet on Mars.

At a moment in our history where we want every student in this country—every one of them—to dream big dreams and to strive for high goals and explore careers in science, technology, engineering, and math, regardless of where they are from or whom they love or what color their skin is, sending someone like Representative BRIDENSTINE to lead our Nation's space agency would send the absolute wrong signal and move our country in the absolute wrong direction. So I will be voting against that nomination, and I will be strongly encouraging our colleagues to do so as well.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

(The remarks of Mr. MERKLEY pertaining to the introduction of S. 2708 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. MERKLEY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF JAMES BRIDENSTINE

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I rise to support the upcoming confirmation this week of my friend JIM BRIDENSTINE to be Administrator of NASA.

We are now in our second year without a Senate-confirmed Administrator

of NASA. Not only has that been bad for the United States, but it is also bad for the commercial space industry, NASA, and all of us who prioritize restoring and strengthening America's leadership in space. NASA needs a strong leader, and it will have that strong leader in JIM BRIDENSTINE.

I serve as the chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee's Space Subcommittee, and I am proud and deeply gratified that President Trump chose to nominate Representative JIM BRIDENSTINE to lead NASA. I can think of very few people I know who are more inspirational than Jim. Unfortunately, throughout Representative BRIDENSTINE's confirmation process, we have seen cynical politicians attempting to malign his character, despite the fact that he has spent his entire adult life in public service.

JIM BRIDENSTINE is a veteran and a war hero. He is a man of deep character and deep integrity. Having served our Nation in combat as a fighter pilot, he earned the respect of the men and women who served under his command.

Representative BRIDENSTINE's combat missions included airborne battlefield command and control and tactical air control flights in support of the liberation of Iraq, controlling over 180 kill box interdiction and close-air support missions, resulting in the destruction of countless tanks, armored vehicles, and time-sensitive fixed targets.

Representative BRIDENSTINE later transitioned to the F/A-18 Hornet while on Active Duty, serving at the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center, TOPGUN command, where he flew both the E-2 and F28. There, he received fitness reports from his commanding officers, which rated him as "the number one Hawkeye pilot and weapons and tactic instructor" and "the most tactically skilled pilot in the E-2 community." That is a remarkable record, and it is one that has been followed by honorable and distinguished service in the U.S. Congress.

Throughout my time in the Senate, I have been blessed to meet with a number of astronauts. It is worth noting that quite a number of those astronauts at NASA have backgrounds very similar to that of Representative BRIDENSTINE. He will be able to lead them as one who has served in missions similar to the ones they have served in and are serving now. I have no doubt he will be an effective leader of NASA and will work to ensure the safety of the men and women who step forward to save our country; that he will work to lead NASA in a way to ensure that America continues to lead in space, and, in particular, that NASA and the commercial space sector, working hand in hand, will move forward to implement the bipartisan commitment this Congress has made that man will go back to space and go to Mars and that, in particular, the first foot that sets on the soil of Mars will be an American astronaut landing to explore that next frontier.

I urge my colleagues to put aside partisan politics. If this vote were on the merits, Representative BRIDENSTINE should be confirmed 100 to 0 on the merits. I urge my colleagues to come together so we can have a strong leader of NASA, an honorable war hero, and a leader who will lead space exploration going forward.

ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. President, I also rise to join Israel and the Jewish people to celebrate Israel Independence Day.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the modern State of Israel. On Friday, May 14, 1948, Israel's founding father, David Ben-Gurion, brought together members of the Jewish People's Council in the Tel Aviv Museum. By then, the Zionist movement to rebirth the Jewish state had been at work for decades.

Ben-Gurion stood underneath a portrait of the pioneer of that movement, Theodor Herzl, and described the historic right of the Jewish people to the land of Israel.

The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spirit, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

That writing had been recognized by the international community, he said, and declared the founding of the modern State of Israel. He also said:

We, members of the People's Council, representatives of the Jewish community of Eretz-Israel and of the Zionist Movement, are here assembled on the day of the termination of the British Mandate over Eretz-Israel and, by virtue of our natural and historic right and on the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz-Israel to be known as the State of Israel.

Eleven minutes after Ben-Gurion made his declaration, and over the objection of many of his advisers and the State Department, President Harry S. Truman courageously recognized the State of Israel. I am sorry it took us a full 11 minutes to do so.

Meanwhile, armies from five Arab States declared war and invaded, in an attempt to destroy the new state. Despite being outgunned and outnumbered, Israel would prevail.

The Israeli victory might not have happened without heroic soldiers who had recently returned from World War II, including Jewish Americans volunteering to go and help. Some volunteers provided badly needed weapons, others offered military experience, and some fought.

In 1951, then serving as Israel's first Prime Minister, Ben-Gurion established Israel's Memorial Day, which takes place the day before Israel Independence Day and which commemo-

rates those killed in the wars and the terror campaigns waged against Israel.

From Tuesday to Wednesday evening, Israel came to a complete standstill in honor of the 23,646 Israelis who have fallen in wars, and the 3,134 terrorist victims since 1860. I stand shoulder to shoulder with Israel in commemoration.

It has been seven decades since Prime Minister Ben-Gurion made his historic declaration of independence and President Truman gave his historic recognition, and I am proud to say that America continues to stand unshakably with our allies.

On December 6, 2017, President Trump rightly recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital and announced that the U.S. Embassy would be moving to Jerusalem, implementing the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 that was adopted overwhelmingly by Congress. I have long advocated and supported the United States to take these two actions which are required to rectify a historic injustice.

Jerusalem has been the eternal capital of the Jewish people for over 3,000 years and the capital of the Jewish state since its founding in 1948.

I recently introduced a resolution reaffirming the deep connection between the Jewish people and Jerusalem and denouncing efforts at UNESCO that have attempted to rewrite historic truth and to erase from history undeniable facts. I am also proud my home State of Texas adopted legislation on Israel Independence Day last year to combat the anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions, the BDS movement. On May 14, 2018, exactly seven decades since President Truman recognized Israel, the United States will finally and formally recognize as much and open our Embassy in Jerusalem.

I, along with many millions across our Nation and across the world, look forward to that day, and we stand in alliance and solidarity with the people of Israel, celebrating the great friendship, the great national security alliance between two great nations.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JOHN A. WILLIAMS

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, the Senate is a great place. It is a great honor to be able to speak here, whether you are discussing your beliefs on an issue of major importance, honoring a friend, or, on rare occasions but all too often when you get to be my age, paying tribute to someone who has given so much and passed away.

Such happened in my State this past Monday, on the 16th of April, when John A. Williams died. He was 74 years old.

John Williams was a giant in every way in our State. He was a giant entrepreneur. He founded two great companies, one of them called Post Properties, the largest apartment REIT on the New York Stock Exchange. He started it in 1993 and built it to new heights.

Most recently, a few years ago, he started PAC, Preferred Apartment Communities, a REIT also, and he did the same with it—employing thousands of people, building thousands of units for housing in America.

He set the pace of housing in his career. I don't know how many people have noticed that in the suburbs of all major cities today, office parks and apartment complexes of any size are now some of the most beautifully landscaped places in the community. Thirty years ago, nobody planted a stick. Nobody planted a shrub. Nobody planted a flower.

John Williams became the largest importer of Holland bulbs in the United States of America. Every spring, tulips blossomed at Post Properties apartment buildings. In fact, he changed the advertising mode for apartments. Instead of calling them apartments, he called them apartment homes because he wanted his apartments and all the rental units to be looked upon by the people who lived there as their home. He sold that concept and built that concept and replicated it over and over, and it became the standard in Georgia. I have traveled the country, and it has become the standard all over the country in terms of apartment houses and landscaping for major commercial properties.

He was a great entrepreneur, building two great companies and helping thousands of other people in many other ways to build their companies.

He was a great father, a great husband, and a great family man. His wife Nancy is a wonderful "first lady" in our community. Parker, Sarah Brook, and Jay, his children, are all great contributors to our community. They all know how lucky they are to have had such a great father.

He was a great sportsman. When I say a great sportsman, I mean a great sportsman. He built Ranger, a replica of the 1937 America's Cup winner, one of the biggest yachts in the world, and sailed the world on that yacht and won races all around.

Also as a sportsman, he was a minority owner of the Atlanta Falcons. He invested with Arthur Blank in the Atlanta Falcons. They almost got to the Super Bowl—they got to the Super Bowl; they just couldn't finish the drill with the Patriots. One day we are going to figure out a way to do that, and I hope, in memory of John, we will be able to do it for him.

John was a community man. Who have you ever heard of in your lifetime who, in the same lifetime, was president of two different competing chambers of commerce, next door to each other? He was twice the president of

the DeKalb County Chamber of Commerce. While running Post Properties and PAC communities, while doing all of the things he did with his family, while racing his boat and owning the Falcons, he built two great chambers of commerce and sought others to come to the communities where he was prospering and helped build their businesses. Then he became president of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. The Atlanta and DeKalb County Chambers of Commerce are the one and two largest chambers in our State. Instead of fighting each other, he brought them together.

He was a builder, he was a giant, but also a broker of common interests. He found the good in every opportunity and tried to sell the good and forget about the bad. He tried to bring out the best in everybody. I never made a deal with John Williams or saw a deal that he had made—I never saw anybody leave the closing table who didn't feel good. His knack was to be sure that if you left the closing table and you had a check, you felt good about it, and if you had just written a check, you felt good about it. He wasn't a win-lose person, he was a win-win person, and that is why he was such a great businessman and such a great entrepreneur.

He was a great friend and a giant of a friend to me. I met him 50 years ago next month.

This may sound funny, but it is a great story. He worked for the Georgia Power Company, and I worked for a small real estate company called Northside Realty Associates. Our first two jobs—his with Georgia Power and mine with Northside—were to hold open the total electric house of the year in 1967. That meant that we drew the last straw, and every night, from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m., we held the houses open in hopes that someone would come to look at them. The electric utilities hoped someone would build a totally electric house. It was a marketing tool. It was the first time they had ever done it, and we enjoyed doing it and I got to know John.

I remember the nights when John talked about what he wanted to be, how he wanted to build a company, how he wanted to be an entrepreneur, how he wanted to be a real estate developer, and how he wanted to make things better. We got to be good friends. In fact, I sold him a 4-acre piece of land where he built the house he lived in for years before he built the home he was in today. I participated with him in another real estate transaction he did and helped him with some of the properties he put together. I always found him to be a win-win guy.

He was my friend, he was my supporter, and he was my confidante. He was also my greatest critic. Every politician in America should be lucky enough to have a John Williams, because John will tell you what you want to hear, but he tells you what you don't want to hear. When you are on the wrong track, he will straighten you out.

Sure, he could write checks all day long. But the Presiding Officer and I know that it is not just the checks that they write. It is the advice they give, and it is the passions they have. When you find somebody who has a passion for their family, a passion for building businesses, a passion for their community, and a passion for everything that is good about America, you have found somebody you want to keep close to you. For 50 years, I stayed close to John Williams.

When I got the news about John Williams before I boarded a plane on Monday to come up here, I started crying—that is how close he was to me—but so did everybody else I ran into that day or have talked to on the phone since being back home. Everybody misses John and was shocked by his going. But realizing the troubles and the difficulties that he had had in recent years—back surgeries and things of that nature—and realizing, like all of us do at that age, when you are 74, which I am, that you know time is running out. You just don't know how fast it is running out. But it is a good example of how you always want to be ready whenever that day comes and know the legacy you left was a better legacy than the one you inherited.

John was a man of modest means at his birth. When he graduated from high school in the public schools of Georgia and went to the Georgia Institute of Technology—better known as Georgia Tech—he graduated with debt and a modest means but with great values and great principles.

The story about the flowers was all because of his mom, who wanted to landscape everything and make it look pretty and beautiful—proof that it didn't take a lot of money to make things look good; it took a lot of heart.

I am sad today, and all of Georgia is sad today, and they will be even sadder on Monday when we say good-bye to John Williams. But all of us should hope and all of us should pray that all of us have the time in our lives to know somebody as good, as decent, as honorable, and as compassionate for their community and as a lover of their country as John A. Williams of Atlanta, GA, my good friend.

God bless you, John, and God bless the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

NOMINATION OF JAMES BRIDENSTINE

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I am here to join Ranking Member NELSON and my colleagues to voice my opposition to JAMES BRIDENSTINE, who has been nominated to be the next Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

NASA is an agency that has been at the center of our Nation's modern history and impacts the daily lives of millions of Americans. The world watched in awe as Neil Armstrong took that first step onto the surface of the Moon in July of 1969, wearing a NASA patch

on his spacesuit. Today, we marvel at photos of Pluto's surface, captured by NASA's New Horizons mission in July of 2015. From the closest to the farthest reaches of our own solar system, NASA is always there.

NASA is at a critical point in its history, and that is because the United States is poised to unleash the next great feat of human innovation as we look to unlock the true possibilities of space. To accomplish these goals, we need a solid foundation, and that starts and ends with the science conducted at NASA every single day. NASA's mission involves not just revealing far-away worlds but investigating the realities of our own. In order to truly do that, we need continued scientific research of the highest caliber.

The scientists working at NASA today are among the very best in the world. NASA, in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA, produces and analyzes the most robust data we have on our planet's changing climate. The OCO-3 program monitors Earth's atmospheric carbon levels. The CLARREO Pathfinder mission measures Earth's atmospheric heat. The Deep Space Climate Observatory satellite provides our scientists comprehensive data sets that are crucial to understanding the vast changes that are underway on our own planet this very second.

On NASA's website right now, there is a web page entitled "Scientific Consensus: Earth's Climate is Warming." On this web page, based on NASA's vast collection of data, it continues, "The impacts of climate change are already occurring. Sea levels are rising, and snow and ice cover is decreasing. . . . The warming climate likely will cause more floods, droughts and heat waves. The heat waves may get hotter, and hurricanes may get stronger." Those are NASA's words, and we know them to be true because science has proved it.

NASA's science is the gold standard. Its scientific work is crucial to our understanding the threat that climate change poses to our Nation, our economy, and the health of all Americans and people around the world. But Houston, we have a problem. NASA's science, NASA's missions, and American leadership will all be in serious jeopardy if JAMES BRIDENSTINE is confirmed to be the next Administrator of NASA. Under his leadership, NASA would come to stand for "not accepting scientific advice."

Congressman BRIDENSTINE's record is one of questioning climate change and undermining science. He has repeatedly questioned the scientific consensus and the threats of climate change. Before changing his website, it stated: "Global warming theories should not drive national energy policy without clearer evidence." Global warming isn't theory; it is based on science. Unfortunately, Mr. BRIDENSTINE's words do not reflect the accepted science behind climate change, including the very

science that NASA has been collecting and needs to continue to collect.

Under President Trump, we know that fear is rampant across the Federal Government among scientists. It is no surprise that the environmental and scientific communities across the country are asking that we vote down Congressman BRIDENSTINE's nomination based on his voting record and his clear denial of accepted science. If Mr. BRIDENSTINE is confirmed as the Administrator of NASA, he will bring that fear to its scientists at a time when we need them more than ever.

It is not only his views on science that make him unsuitable to lead NASA. NASA's workforce is comprised of more than 18,000 workers who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer. NASA has officially stated that "diversity and inclusion are integral to mission success." In a 2013 speech on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressman BRIDENSTINE declared: "Marriage exists to bring a man and a woman together as husband and wife, to be a father and mother to children." He has stated repeatedly that he would support a constitutional amendment defining marriage as between one man and one woman.

Congressman BRIDENSTINE's personal views and voting record against people who identify as LGBTQ should immediately disqualify him from consideration for leading this diverse agency. NASA is an agency of inspiration, an agency that showcases the very best of American ideals: scientific integrity, innovation, diversity, fearlessness, resolve, and hope. Mr. BRIDENSTINE puts these ideals at risk and is not qualified to lead this agency.

I urge my colleagues to oppose his nomination. I urge a "no" vote.

I yield back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMEMORATING VAISAKHI

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to recognize and celebrate with my Sikh friends, my constituents, and friends from the Sikh community of Pennsylvania and beyond.

I start with the acknowledgment that my pronunciation of certain words may be off, and I hope I will be forgiven.

I am delighted to have so many wonderful representatives of the Sikh community here with us in Washington. I thank them. I thank Raj Singh and all of the members of the Sikh community of Pennsylvania who made this trip down to Washington, DC, to participate in a celebration for an important holi-

day and to raise awareness about the Sikh community.

Sikhism has been around for nearly 600 years and originated in the Punjab region of India in the 15th century. Today, there are about 30 million Sikhs who live in countries all around the world, making it one of the world's largest religions. Sikhism is rooted in the belief that every single person—every individual—regardless of race, gender, sex, or creed, is equal before God. Sikhism was introduced in the United States in the 19th century. Today, there are about 700,000 Sikhs who live in the United States, and a large number of Sikhs reside in Pennsylvania. In fact, there are several Sikh places of worship, known as gurdwaras, and they are located throughout Pennsylvania—in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Allentown, and Erie.

In my many travels across Pennsylvania, I have had an opportunity to meet with and get to know hard-working Sikh constituents. I can tell you they are close-knit, vibrant communities, deeply committed to their families—fully American while, at the same time, preserving some wonderful and often very old traditions. The Sikhs constitute a part of the rich, cultural fabric of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and I am grateful to them for what they add to my State.

A few years back, I was proud to join the American Sikh Congressional Caucus. As a member of this caucus, we honor and recognize the Sikh holiday of Vaisakhi. The holiday itself is usually celebrated on the first day of the month of Vaisakhi, which just occurred last week on Saturday, April 14. Vaisakhi is a special occasion for Sikhs to remember the founding in 1699 of the Khalsa Panth. The Khalsa were a fellowship of devout "saint-soldier" Sikhs who played an important role in shaping the religion's history and its identity.

The holiday also recognizes the spring harvest. Sikhs recognize this important holiday with parades, with dancing, with singing, and with other festivities, as well as with volunteer service, especially volunteering meals to those in need and other forms of community service.

This year, the Sikh Coordination Committee East Coast, with the support of the U.S. Congressional Sikh Caucus, has organized a parade in Washington on May 19 to commemorate Vaisakhi as National Sikh Day. The theme of the parade is the Sikh identity, the Sikh culture, the Sikh way of life, and thousands of Sikhs from all over the United States will be participating.

I am proud of the Sikh communities of Pennsylvania, and I wish the Sikh community much luck in the parade and a very joyous Vaisakhi.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING BARBARA BUSH

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, yesterday, our country lost a bright, caring, independent lady, and my wife, Honey, and I lost a good friend. Barbara Bush set a wonderful example as mom, wife, First Lady, and advocate for adult literacy. We express to the Bush family our sympathy and great respect for the life of Barbara Bush.

Jon Meacham wrote the biography of George H.W. Bush, Barbara Bush's husband, to great acclaim. He had access to the diaries of President Bush and Barbara Bush that was almost unparalleled in any Presidential biographer's experience. So it was a plain and unvarnished biography that told us a lot about those two individuals. I thought a better name for Jon Meacham's book—it was named "Destiny and Power," and it must have been properly named because it sold a lot—would be "The Last Gentleman." If I were to make a really accurate suggestion about the title for the book, I would call it "The Last Gentleman and His Lady" or maybe "The Last Gentleman and His Very Independent Lady" because Barbara Bush was a very independent lady.

I remember it was 1991. It was a sunny day, and we were walking on the south lawn of the White House. I was the Education Secretary, and I was walking with the President and Mrs. Bush to the announcement of his GI Bill for Kids, which was a school choice program for low-income children. As we walked along, Barbara Bush turned to President Bush and said, "George, you've got on the wrong pants." He had a suit coat on from one suit, and he had pants on from another suit. So she said to the President "You go on back in and change clothes, and Lamar and I will wait here for you," which we did and he did.

On another occasion, President Bush invited my wife and me to join Barbara and the President at Ford's theater. Of course, the President traveled with great security in a big car. As the protocol goes, he got out first, and as she was about to get out, she said, "I'll get the door, George."

On still another occasion, I was sitting next to Barbara and George Bush, and the President was called on to make some remarks. He leaned over to his wife and said, "Barbara, what should I talk about?" And she whispered very loudly, "About five minutes, George."

Barbara Bush was quite a woman. She said what she thought. When the second one of her sons decided to run for President, she was reported to have said, "We've had enough Bushes."

When I ran for President in 1999 against her other son, I made what I thought—certainly by today's standards—some very mild comments disagreeing about something, and I heard

from Barbara Bush about what I had said about her son, George W. Bush.

Not many of us think how difficult it must be to be the spouse of a President of the United States with all that one goes through, but think how much harder it must also be to be the mother of a President of the United States and the mother of another distinguished son who was Governor of a large State and who ran for President of the United States. Barbara Bush was the anchor of her family, and a very successful and remarkable family it was.

I was Education Secretary for President Bush in 1991 when the National Literacy Act was enacted. Let's use Barbara's own words to define the event. She wrote in her memoir, "I must say I got more credit than I deserve."

I don't agree with that, but she continued:

I heard that George was going to give the pen to me, but before he could, Senator Simon spoke up and said, "That pen ought to go to Barbara." I donated it to the George Bush Presidential Library Center. In the end, however it's not pens and pictures that count; it's the National Literacy Act that really counts. It was the first piece of legislation—and to date, the only one—ever enacted specifically for literacy with the goal of ensuring that every American adult acquires the basic literacy skills necessary to achieve the greatest possible satisfaction professionally and personally. But even more than that, the act seeks to strengthen our nation by giving us more productive workers and informed citizens.

In his biography of President George H.W. Bush, John Meacham wrote of a "generational controversy," in his words, that Barbara Bush endured in May of 1990. She was invited to Wellesley College to speak at graduation and receive an honorary degree, but she was being criticized by Wellesley's young women, as President Bush put in his own diary—these are President Bush's words—"because she hasn't made it on her own—she's where she is because she's her husband's wife. What's wrong with the fact that she's a good mother," President Bush wrote in his diary, "a good wife, great volunteer, great leader for literacy and other fine causes? Nothing. But to listen to these elitist kids there is."

Meacham writes:

Mrs. Bush invited [Mrs.] Gorbachev along with her to Wellesley. There, [she] confronted the issues of work versus family and the role of women head-on, delivering a well-received commencement address.

She put the audience at ease early on by saying: One day, I am sure that someone in this audience will grow up to become a spouse of the President of the United States, and I wish him well.

Meacham continues:

"Maybe we should adjust faster, maybe we should adjust slower," she told the graduates. "But whatever the era, whatever the times, one thing will never change: Fathers and mothers, if you have children—they must come first. You must read to your children, and you must hug your children, and you must love your children. Your success as a family, our success as a society depends

not on what happens in the White House, but on what happens inside your house."

Barbara Bush said that to the Wellesley graduates in 1990.

The country is expressing to the Bush family, as I am trying to today, our great respect for Barbara Bush's life.

President Bush, George H.W. Bush, has sent a response to those of us who sent our condolences, and I would like to close with the President's own words about his wife Barbara. This is what George H.W. Bush said:

I always knew Barbara was the most beloved woman in the world, and in fact I used to tease her that I had a complex about that fact. But the truth is the outpouring of love and friendship being directed at The Enforcer is lifting us all up. We have faith she is in heaven, and we know life will go on—as she would have it. So cross the Bushes off your worry list.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask for the yeas and nays on the pending nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Muniz nomination?

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. McCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 79 Ex.]

YEAS—55

Alexander	Gardner	Nelson
Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blunt	Grassley	Perdue
Boozman	Hatch	Portman
Burr	Heitkamp	Risch
Capito	Heller	Roberts
Cassidy	Hoever	Rounds
Collins	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Corker	Inhofe	Sasse
Cornyn	Isakson	Scott
Cotton	Johnson	Shelby
Crapo	Jones	Sullivan
Cruz	Kennedy	Thune
Daines	Lankford	Tillis
Donnelly	Lee	Toomey
Enzi	Manchin	Wicker
Ernst	McConnell	Young
Fischer	Moran	
Flake	Murkowski	

NAYS—43

Baldwin	Cortez Masto	Klobuchar
Bennet	Durbin	Leahy
Blumenthal	Feinstein	Markey
Booker	Gillibrand	McCaskill
Brown	Harris	Menendez
Cantwell	Hassan	Merkley
Cardin	Heinrich	Murphy
Carper	Hirono	Murray
Casey	Kaine	Peters
Coons	King	Reed

Sanders	Stabenow	Warren
Schatz	Tester	Whitehouse
Schumer	Udall	Wyden
Shaheen	Van Hollen	
Smith	Warner	

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth

McCain

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

NOMINATION OF MIKE POMPEO

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, over the past 24 hours we have learned of a high-level meeting between Director Pompeo—Mike Pompeo, the President's nominee to become Secretary of State—and Kim Jong Un, the leader—the tyrant leader—of North Korea, who has threatened to use nuclear weapons not only against our allies but against the United States and has a growing capability in his efforts to do just that.

We have also seen incredible partisan obstruction threatened on his nomination. The absurd levels of partisanship in this Chamber are a stain on our institution. We see it at every level of nominations, from ambassadorships to commissions to boards. Now we see it at the level of the Secretary of State, a position that will be instrumental in denuclearizing the North Korean regime.

Director Pompeo had his confirmation hearing last week before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. We now know that his testimony at this committee hearing took place after he had visited Kim Jong Un, and in this committee hearing, he made it very clear that our goal remains the complete and verifiable irreversible denuclearization. That is the stated goal, confirmed by Director Pompeo: the complete and verifiable irreversible denuclearization of North Korea. Yet we now have people threatening to stop this nomination at a critical time when we face a nuclear threat that is the greatest this country has seen since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Our colleagues on the other side of the aisle would decide to deny this country its top State Department diplomat.

Let me describe what some of our colleagues have said who have claimed now that they are going to vote against Mike Pompeo for Secretary of State but who, just a few months back, voted to confirm Mike Pompeo. One of my colleagues who is voting against Director Pompeo for Secretary of State has admitted that Director Pompeo has been a "solid manager" of the CIA, saying:

I voted for him to head the CIA and don't wish I had that vote back. I think he has a background in intel and has been a solid manager there.

Another colleague, who tried to criticize Director Pompeo's diversity policies at the CIA, was met with this response from Director Pompeo, who explained at the hearing that those types of complaints decreased under his leadership. Mike Pompeo stated: "The number of—we call them 'no fear complaints'—the statutory requirement decreased from 2016 to 2017 by 40 percent."

Director Pompeo further explained: "I'm proud of the record . . . the work that my team has done on this."

So concerns about diversity policies was refuted at the committee hearing.

Another Senator seems worried that Mike Pompeo is conducting diplomacy and said: "Pompeo is the wrong person to be engaging in diplomacy."

The nominee to be Secretary of State is the wrong person to be conducting diplomacy? Perhaps we need somebody working at the Department of Transportation. Maybe that is the person they want to conduct diplomacy. Building interstates—maybe that is who they think should be conducting diplomacy. I would rather have somebody who has been nominated to be Secretary of State to be conducting diplomacy—somebody who has an outstanding background in the military, somebody who stood in Europe during the height of the Cold War, standing on the iron wall.

This is a time when we ought to be doing everything we can to confirm a Secretary of State—somebody who has had meetings already with Kim Jong Un, who has an understanding of what has to happen to achieve what Kim Jong Un has said—denuclearization—to achieve what is the goal of this country, the stated goal that is already enshrined in law: complete and verifiable irreversible denuclearization.

To simply oppose his nomination for partisan purposes is wrong. We have seen it time and again. What we have is a simple partisan effort to derail the top diplomat, who is already engaged in top-level negotiations about denuclearization with the most significant threat this country has seen since the Cuban Missile Crisis. This country deserves better. Certainly this institution can do better.

We have somebody in Mike Pompeo with a solid background, an understanding of diplomacy and, clearly, the intelligence background through his time at the CIA, and now he would be denied this opportunity simply because of his political affiliation.

This country deserves better.

I urge my colleagues to stop this absurd obstruction and confirm Mike Pompeo, and let's get to work achieving what could be lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. That time is now, and I urge my colleagues to take the opportunity for peace.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION LEGISLATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the Senate routinely reauthorizes the Coast Guard, much like the Defense act. It shouldn't be a terribly partisan issue. It never has been. We all deeply respect the work of the Coast Guard and recognize the heroism of the men and women who serve in that capacity.

But, unfortunately, the Republican majority slipped a poison pill rider into this otherwise noncontroversial bill that would repeal part of the Clean Water Act. That is why the Coast Guard reauthorization bill failed today.

The rider would prohibit the EPA and the States from regulating pollution and invasive species from the ballast water of large vessels. Instead, it would let the Coast Guard set regulations—an agency that doesn't have the environmental expertise of the EPA. This is a massive change to the Clean Water Act.

The Clean Water Act has worked well for decades because the States drive innovation and enforcement in partnership with the EPA. Under this law, States would no longer be able to do that. The idea of States' rights goes out the window.

I have visited many different parts of my State, in Upstate New York, where invasive species have long plagued communities, or parts of Long Island, where toxic chemicals and algae plague the bays and beaches. They hurt our clamming industry severely. They hurt businesses, they hurt tourism, and they hurt fishing as well—you name it.

We believe the rider will cost many States tens of billions of dollars in lost economic activity. Let me repeat that. Many States will lose tens of billions of dollars in economic activity because of this rider.

Let me also say this about small recreational fishermen—and New York State is third in the number of recreational pleasure boats. No one is proposing to hurt the little guy. That is why Democrats are ready to permanently exempt them from vessel discharge requirements.

Finally, let me make a point about progress and regular order. The vessel discharge provisions in this bill violate the regular order of the Senate. This is a matter under the jurisdiction of the Environment and Public Works Committee, not the Commerce Committee. There was no consultation with the EPW minority on this provision. There were no hearings. Instead, the Commerce Committee inserted these provisions into the Coast Guard reauthorization bill over the objection of many Democrats.

So I will be offering shortly to pass a clean Coast Guard reauthorization bill by unanimous consent. It includes a permanent exemption from discharge

requirements for small recreational fishermen. Democrats are ready to pass this Coast Guard bill as is, without the poison pill environmental rider.

Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment at the desk to the McConnell motion to concur with amendment No. 2232 be called up and made in order; that the amendment be agreed to; that the motion to concur with amendment No. 2232, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motion to refer and all other amendments be withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, there is no objection to the Senate considering an amendment to strike the VIDA language. We have offered our colleagues the opportunity to vote on this amendment all week, and if the Senate needs to speak on the question of whether to include the VIDA language in the Coast Guard bill, I would welcome that debate and a fair up-or-down vote. There are many supporters of this language from both sides of the aisle, and I am confident the amendment would be defeated.

I would ask the Senator to revise his request: That the Senate resume consideration of the Coast Guard legislation; that the amendment to strike the VIDA provision be made pending and the Senate vote on the amendment prior to a vote on the motion to concur with further amendment.

So would the Senator be willing to modify?

Mr. SCHUMER. I will not.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. MCCONNELL. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority leader.

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today Senate Democrats have filibustered legislation to reauthorize funding for our Coast Guard.

In a dangerous world, the brave men and women of the Coast Guard are always ready for the call, whether it be to interdict drugs, to secure our ports, or to conduct daring maritime rescues. They deserve our support. They don't deserve a filibuster for the sake of political posturing. So let's have a little plain talk about why the bill failed.

Democrats filibustered this legislation because it contains an eminently sensible, bipartisan provision to streamline regulations for the mariners and vessel operators who drive America's maritime economy. It would cut back on duplicative rules and overlapping enforcement and provide a uniform standard that protects the environment and commerce alike.

If this sounds like a commonsense, bipartisan measure, that is because that is exactly what it is. This legislation has been favorably reported by the Commerce Committee six times—six

times—during the last three Congresses, including when our Democratic friends controlled the committee.

You might think that would be enough around here to get a bill passed. But earlier today, a number of the very same Democrats who cosponsored this very legislation, in this very Congress, flip-flopped under partisan pressure and voted against it. In fact, if all of the Senate Democrats who are currently cosponsors of this provision had voted for the bill, the cloture motion would have passed. Let me say that again. If the cosponsors of this measure in this Congress had voted for the bill, the cloture motion would have passed. If only those Democrats who had put their name on this provision would have actually followed through and voted for it, the filibuster would be over.

Look, our constituents sent us here to stand for their interests. In landlocked States like Kentucky and Missouri, thousands and thousands of jobs depend on our inland waterways. In coastal States like Delaware, Washington, and Florida, major ports enable hundreds of billions of dollars of U.S. commerce. Of course, the people of Hawaii rely on shipping for everything from groceries to gasoline.

In all of these States, and elsewhere, I know workers and job creators were excited about the prospect of reform in this area. How do I know that? Because, in several cases, they successfully persuaded their own Democratic Senators to support it—or so it had seemed, until today.

You know, Americans might be forgiven for thinking that persuading their Senator to go out of their way and cosponsor a bill would be the same thing as persuading them to actually vote for it. Apparently, where several of my Democratic colleagues are concerned, that is simply not the case because when party leaders came calling and asked my colleagues to put party-line obstruction politics ahead of their constituents' best interests, they folded. This is what people don't like about this town.

Well, my Democratic friends' political priorities may have shifted—away from the people they are elected to fight for and toward leftwing pressure groups. But the merits of the issue have not changed, so the Senate will consider this issue further and will vote on this legislation again.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to speak tonight because I did not support the Coast Guard bill as it came out of committee. We wanted to see changes to it, and the legislation that was brought up and the final language on Monday night gave our colleagues very little time to consider it.

Washington State is very proud of the rich maritime heritage the Coast Guard provides, and our fishermen, Tribes, shipbuilders, sea trade, and

thriving coastal tourism all count on us to work together for our maritime economy.

Thousands of Pacific Northwest fishermen call Washington State home, with over 35,000 Washington State jobs supported by Alaska fisheries. The ports of Tacoma and Seattle are combined to be the fourth largest container gateway in the United States.

The Coast Guard plays a pivotal role in national security, in fishing, in over-seeing and, in many ways, keeping our waterways safe. That is why we would love to see a Coast Guard bill which moves forward without the controversial pieces of language that are included.

I know many of my colleagues have thought this is a way to get our colleagues from the Midwest, and other places, to just swallow wholesale huge changes that could cost our economy billions of dollars—such as the zebra mussel, which alone would cost \$6.4 billion a year, and an ecosystem full of rampant and sometimes toxic algae growth, which would and destroy recreation. This is from a letter regarding the Coast Guard Authorization Act.

I would like to see us move forward tonight on the things we can agree on—Why? Because I know these things are important as well—and continue to work on a resolution for some of the thornier issues that still remain.

I would like to see us move forward. I would like to see a recapitalization of the Coast Guard icebreaker and Polar Star. The Polar Star is homeported in Seattle and is operational only for our heavy icebreaker capabilities.

This bill also includes language to improve the Coast Guard oversight of ships that pose an oilspill risk, which is a constant threat to us in Puget Sound and throughout the West, given the large amount of oil traffic that comes through Puget Sound out our strait.

The bill also includes language to strengthen paid family leave policies at the Coast Guard. We just had the commandant nominee before the Commerce Committee. One of the reasons I questioned him on the paid family leave strategies and moving forward is that I want to give him every tool to continue to keep the workforce of women that they have in the Coast Guard. His commitment to me is that they would love to see this strengthened paid family leave policy in the underlying Coast Guard bill. Why not give that to them tonight? Our Coast Guard families should not be forced to choose between serving their country and supporting their families, and this bill would be a good step forward.

Lastly, this bill includes bipartisan language that would help us protect shipyard jobs by making sure we fix the problem related to Dakota Creek and also making sure our permanent fishing vessel exemptions would be allowed in this legislation.

I know we face challenges on continued definitions of best technology. But

that is better than having a definition that exists in the underlying bill, which I think we should separate the good policy from, that would really make no indication or an economic analysis that would leave us with the Great Lakes, and many areas, without the kind of clean water that will allow us to continue to do good science and good fishery policy in that area of the United States.

I hope we can move forward on the policies that my colleagues know we can get agreement on. I just heard the debate between the majority leader and Senator SCHUMER, so I understand there is an objection to moving the Coast Guard bill.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

I have a bill at the desk to improve the regulation of certain vessels, and I ask unanimous consent, as in legislative session, that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, let me just make one correction for the record that my friend, the Democratic leader, brought up earlier and which has been alluded to by the Senator from Washington.

The issue was a matter under the jurisdiction of the Commerce Committee, and for the information of the Senate, this part of the bill has been introduced as a stand-alone bill. Senate bill 168 was referred to the Commerce Committee and not the EPW Committee, and the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee agrees with that. So this argument that somehow this is not under the committee's jurisdiction is one I would raise as an objection to the request of Senator from Washington.

Secondly, as I think the Senator from Washington knows, we have worked tirelessly with every member of our committee on both sides of the aisle and Members off the committee. Furthermore, I think we have accommodated every request the Senator from Washington has made on this bill, and we have involved her in all these discussions. My understanding was that as a result of that consultation and those discussions on the bill, she was going to vote in favor of the bill.

Now what she wants to do is take out those pieces of a very carefully negotiated bill that she doesn't like and pass just the provisions that she likes. It would be great if, here in the U.S. Senate, we could all do that. But that doesn't happen around here.

We carefully negotiated this, with great input from the Senator from Washington, and it was my understanding that the Senator from Washington was going to vote for this package. I object to picking out the pieces

that we like and not working with the collaborative process that has involved both Republicans and Democrats, both on the committee and off the committee, to bring a bill to the floor that enjoyed 65 votes in support until this afternoon. Politics is being played here—pure and simple, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else.

I object to the Senator's request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I thank my colleague, who I know considers the efforts of the Commerce Committee as great, hard work, and I appreciate his hard work. As I mentioned, I did not support the bill as it came out of committee.

I know there are things we are trying to work on to keep this process moving. But I would say to my colleague, the small vessel discharge bill has been something that has been part of an exemption process related to this for a long time. It has been considered many times over. Our fishermen need the certainty of this.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

I have a bill at the desk related to the application of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and ask unanimous consent that, as in legislative session, the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I would simply say this is peeling out pieces of the bill that one Senator in this Chamber likes and basically telling every other Senator on both sides of the aisle, Republicans and Democrats who negotiated this, to go pound sand: We don't like the provisions that have been negotiated on both sides, very carefully, over months.

I might add, this bill has been introduced and dealt with at the committee level during five different Congresses—five different Congresses. This year, it has passed not once, but twice, out of the Senate Commerce Committee by a voice vote.

It seems to me, at least, that even after it came out of the committee, the fact that we negotiated this with the Senator from Washington and multiple Senators on the other side of the aisle, both on and off the committee, to come up with a balanced package that enjoyed broad bipartisan support—65 votes—until this afternoon, suggests to me this is purely politics being played with this legislation.

This is an important bill. This is the Coast Guard. This is VIDA. VIDA was referred to the Commerce Committee by the Parliamentarian. We have worked with the Commerce Committee; we have worked with the EPW

Committee; we have worked with the EPA. The EPA is supporting the solution. This is not the political-level EPA; these are the career folks at the EPA who support the solution we have come up with. Yet we run into these objections that are all of a sudden—all of a sudden—coming up out of thin air.

So, Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I see my colleague from the Midwest is on the floor, and I am sure he has something to say about this. But I would just say to the chairman of the Commerce Committee: You are right. Years and years of discussion about ballast water has been a challenge.

The question tonight is whether we are going to hold up other legislation just to get that language or to push through a proposal that really doesn't give security for our waters not to be polluted or to be greatly impacted or to threaten the sea life and the opportunities for a vibrant waterway in many parts of the country.

All I am trying to do, as I have always tried to do, is be constructive in the process—both in the Commerce Committee with this issue and for the very issues that affect the Coast Guard and the Pacific Northwest.

I know this will not be the last time we hear about the fishing vessel issue. I am sure we will hear about it many times because it has been on the calendar. So we will continue this discussion, but I thank him for at least coming here tonight to discuss these issues. There are other issues that are being held up as hostage in this legislation, and they shouldn't be held hostage.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank both Senator THUNE and Senator CANTWELL for their exchange back and forth. I especially appreciate Senator CANTWELL's work. I grew up an hour and a half away from Lake Erie and saw, in the 1960s, what that lake looked like. For 10 years, I lived in a home near Lake Erie, and I saw the improvements we made. This bill, unfortunately, with that amendment sets us back.

We need to keep invasive species out of Lake Erie, and we need to pass a Coast Guard bill. There is no reason we can't do both. I want to speak to that in a moment.

First, I want to speak on how vital Lake Erie is to my State. Fifty percent of the fish in all the Great Lakes consider Lake Erie their habitat. The water is critical to farming, clean energy development, industry, and regional economic competitiveness. From tourism in Catawba and Put-in-Bay, to fishing in Marblehead, to vacations and family reunions at Maumee Bay State Park, Lake Erie benefits our communities and creates jobs in Ohio.

For more than half a century—I am going back to when I was a kid in the 1960s and saw what Lake Erie looked like—keeping our lake healthy has been a constant struggle. Where I lived on Lake Erie, the lake was about 50 to 60 feet deep. Moving west toward Toledo, the lake is about 30 feet deep. Contrast that with Lake Superior, which is 600 feet deep, and you can see the challenge of keeping Lake Erie clean, and you can see the vulnerability of that lake. That is the reason for the algal blooms. That is the reason that Lake Erie has had the most difficult issues facing its aquatic life. Runoff that causes harmful algal blooms and invasive species are threats we battle every year.

That is why Senator PORTMAN and I came to this floor and fought back against the President's budget 2 years in a row when the President was going to cut close to \$300 million from the Great Lakes Initiative. Two years in a row, Senator PORTMAN and I fought back against it because we know that cleaning up Lake Erie is something we did in the sixties, but keeping Lake Erie clean is something we do in the seventies, eighties, nineties, into this century, and into this millennium.

The Great Lakes are home to more than 185 non-native species. By some estimates, invasive species cause \$5 billion in damages to the Great Lakes every single year. A provision that would make our fight against invasive species harder has been added to the bill to reauthorize our Coast Guard. That is why I voted no earlier today.

As much as I want Coast Guard reauthorization, my first responsibility, other than looking out for working families in Ohio every day, is to keep the greatest natural resource in the country clean—my part of the Great Lakes, Lake Erie, the part that borders Ohio.

This provision would make it easier for invasive species to enter our lakes, harm our drinking water, and threaten local jobs that depend on boating and fishing. Every year, I meet with the Lake Erie sea captains, boat captains. They talk about the beauty of the lake and the importance of the lake to their businesses and to all of us in Northern Ohio. This provision doesn't belong in the Coast Guard bill. The Senate did the right thing by blocking it.

Again I say I strongly support the Coast Guard reauthorization. I want to see it passed. I agree with Senator THUNE. I want it to be law. That is why it is critical that this provision be removed from the bill so Congress can move forward with supporting our Coast Guard without threatening the Great Lakes. Members of the Coast Guard surely think the same thing.

This provision would eliminate the ability of Great Lakes States, such as Ohio, to set separate water quality standards to keep out invasive species. Tankers and cargo ships carry something called ballast water with them to help with stability and smooth sailing.

When they load on more cargo, they let out some of the water, and it flows out into whatever body of water they happen to be in at that time.

Think about these ships. In some sense, they are luxury liners for invasive species. They might be picked up off the coast of Japan. They might be picked up in the Indian Ocean. They might be picked up in the South Atlantic Ocean. They end up coming down the Saint Lawrence Seaway carrying this water with invasive species from around the world, and they release them into Lake Erie or into Lake Ontario or Lake Michigan or Lake Superior or Lake Huron.

It may not sound like a big deal if a ship takes on water with zebra mussels in the Caspian Sea off the coast of Russia and lets them out in Lake Erie, but those little mussels do major damage to our lakes and our economy. Local governments and taxpayers end up paying the price. This affects the beauty of Lake Erie and the cleanliness of its water. That is so important. It affects the economy because it costs local taxpayers money to clean up from these invasive species. They clog up water intake pipes. They spike costs for local ratepayers. They make toxic algal blooms worse. When drinking water gets contaminated, the local water utility has to clean it up, and they pass on the cost. The fishing and tourism industries rely on Lake Erie and feel that pain.

As I said, I remember how polluted Lake Erie looked when I was growing up. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has made a real difference. We have made real progress cleaning up the lake's tributaries, from the Black River, to the Cuyahoga River, to the Ashtabula River, to the Grand River, to the Maumee River, the largest tributary feeding into any of the Great Lakes, draining 4 million acres west and south of Toledo. It has been a bipartisan success story.

The Great Lakes region contains 84 percent of North America's surface freshwater and provides drinking water to tens of millions of Americans. It generates billions in economic activity. Why would we risk that? Why would we risk that by voting for this bill? That is why Senator CANTWELL was right. We need to pass a Coast Guard bill. We need to keep invasive species out of Lake Erie. We can do both by stripping this provision from the bill right away and move it forward and pass it.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, when we think about climate change—

something we don't do much of in this body—we often think about rising global temperatures and heat waves, and we think of changing weather patterns, stronger storms, or sea level rise threatening coastal communities. We actually see these effects unfold across the United States and around the world as heat records fall, winters shrink, and waters creep ever higher along our coastlines.

We also see the economic consequences of climate change. Just last year, the United States suffered a record 16 separate billion-dollar weather disasters, adding up to well over \$300 billion in damages. Acidifying seawater has devastated shellfish harvests in the Pacific Northwest. Rhode Island fishermen struggle as their traditional catches move farther north and offshore. Insurers and bond rating agencies warn that coastal regions are becoming too risky to build homes and infrastructure.

Among those various hazards, there is another hazard: the effects of climate change on public health. The Rhode Island Department of Health has produced this guide for Rhode Islanders to help them understand the health risks they face from climate change and to better learn how to protect themselves from what are often new risks.

Perhaps the most obvious effect of climate change on public health is increased heat-related illness and mortality. This link has been well studied across the country, often cross-referencing temperature records and death certificates. Work has been done by a lot of places; one of them is Rhode Island's own Brown University.

Here is the Rhode Island Health Department report. Over the last century, Rhode Island's average temperature has already increased by more than 3 degrees Fahrenheit, and temperatures are expected to keep on climbing due to climate change. Currently, Rhode Island sees on average only about 10 days of 90-plus degree temperatures. Starting in the next decade and running through the end of the century, the number of days that the heat index will hit at least 90 degrees will rise to between 13 and 44 days each summer. That is as much as 6 weeks in a summer of heat in the nineties. That increase of hot summer days caused by climate change puts many Rhode Islanders at risk, particularly those who don't have air conditioning, either because they can't afford it or because, right now, they don't need it. Heat waves are the leading cause of extreme weather-related deaths in the United States, causing an average of more than 600 deaths a year and thousands more hospitalizations. Rhode Island, even though we are in the Northeast, is not spared, and with climate change, it will only get worse.

Hot days pose a health risk to many different groups of people, as shown here in Rhode Island's Department of Health report. Children, the elderly,

people who work outdoors, athletes, the disabled, pregnant women, and folks who are on medications that reduce their bodies' ability to dissipate heat are just some of the many people who are especially at risk from heat waves. Because of the nature of their responsibilities, emergency responders are particularly vulnerable.

When I visited Phoenix, AZ, I was told by their emergency response leadership that they are having to restructure the duty schedules to protect firefighters from being overcome, if they are out fighting fires or responding to an emergency in daytime temperatures, because they overheat. So you have to rotate them through much faster and add cooling and hydration teams to support the fire crews as they speed through their heightened rotations.

An ER doc from the Lifespan health system in Rhode Island visited my office and told another story about an older woman who was treated for a heat-related illness. She had just been sitting outside on a hot day, in the Sun, enjoying herself. Perhaps she didn't feel the need to hydrate herself. Perhaps some routine medication that she was on made her more susceptible, but she was not aware of how quickly she was overheating. When her husband returned home from work, he found her lethargic and unable to move, with a body temperature of 107 degrees.

Hotter temperatures are bad on their own because of the effects they have on people's bodies and because of the added deaths that they cause, but they also work to create more ozone. Ozone is dangerous. Ozone is dangerous for children. It is dangerous for the elderly. It is dangerous for anyone with asthma or other breathing-related difficulties. Again, from Rhode Island's health report, Rhode Island's asthma rates are 33 percent higher than national averages for adults and 40 percent higher for children. So asthma is pretty serious for us, and people go to the hospital for this.

This is not just an inconvenience. In Rhode Island, we have heard air quality alerts on morning drive-time radio. You are going in to work and listening to the radio, and the announcer is saying, "Kids, seniors, people with breathing difficulties, you need to stay indoors today." It is a sunny, perfect summer day, it seems. Ozone is not visible, but because it is there and because of what it does to lungs and to asthma, people in Rhode Island are told they can't go outdoors that day. That kind of bad day alert, because it is for ozone, is going to become more frequent as climate change warms up our climate and produces more ozone.

It works this way. Our air in Rhode Island is polluted, primarily, by mid-western powerplants. Out in the Midwest, they run the emissions up supertall smokestacks. The pollution is then injected up into the atmosphere and is carried away on prevailing winds. Guess what. It bakes in the Sun,

turns to ozone, and it lands on us—not them, us. It is their pollution, our lungs.

Thanks a bunch, guys.

Our air is also worsened by smoke from forest fires, even from as far away as Canada, and the warming climate, as the Presiding Officer knows, has created an extraordinary fire situation out West. Changing precipitation patterns have produced more fires, and that means more smoke in downwind States, and we are a downwind State.

The result of all of this is that Rhode Island's air quality receives only a C from the American Lung Association. This poor grade is largely because of ozone, most of which comes from out of State. We end up with grade C air because of, primarily, out-of-State pollutants. This is not just some minor inconvenience. Across the country, air pollution—much of it made worse by climate change—is responsible for a staggering 200,000 premature deaths each year.

Pollen is another problem. Shifting seasons produce a longer pollen season. Increased pollen levels, particularly with increased air pollution, kick in allergies, which takes us into another risk. The warmth of earlier springs and later falls also means that tick and mosquito season in Rhode Island lasts far longer than it used to, and that moves us to yet more health risks and diseases.

Rhode Island already has the fourth highest rate of Lyme disease in the country. We have over 900 cases a year, and as temperatures increase, we are likely to see the number of ticks in Rhode Island increase, which would be expected to lead to even more cases of Lyme disease. In States not too far north of us, the tick situation has gotten so out of control that they are actually seeing moose calves die off because they are so swarmed with ticks. I am sorry. I know this is a little bit gross, but calves are dying when their bodies can't support both their own metabolism and feeding the ticks that have crawled up onto them in the thousands—in some cases, over 10,000 ticks. So we have to be concerned about this not just for ourselves but for the wildlife around us.

Warmer temperatures also provide a longer breeding season for mosquitoes. More downpours—yet another result of climate change—result in more standing water, which is habitat for mosquito larvae. Rhode Island has been up 76 percent in extreme downpours since 1950. That is the largest increase in extreme precipitation events out of all 50 States. Of course, these little critters, the mosquitoes, carry the West Nile virus, the Eastern equine encephalitis, and other illnesses we didn't used to see in our State.

As if all of this were not bad enough, climate change is also worsening another natural hazard that threatens public health—harmful algae blooms. Algae naturally occur in lakes and oceans, but in certain conditions, algae

populations can explode. These blooms, they call them—blooms of algae—can slime waterways and overwhelm ecosystems, eating up nutrients, and they can deplete oxygen in the water and in the oceans so completely that no other life can exist, so that other creatures—fish—actually suffocate in the water. Algae are often, therefore, the reason behind massive fish kills.

Some kinds of algae even produce toxins. People can become sick from exposure to the contaminated, toxin-filled water and even from the air if you get enough surface turbulence and churning of waves that it aerates the toxins, and then it is inhaled. The toxins can get into our food chain. They end up in shellfish and seafood on our dinner plates. Depending on which toxin it is, the consequences for people, for pets, and for wildlife can range from rashes and skin irritation, to pretty severe neurological and gastrointestinal symptoms, to respiratory arrest, and even death.

In 2016, New England was hit for the first time by a Pseudo-nitzschia bloom—a kind of algae that produces a toxin, domoic acid, which caused large swaths of Narragansett Bay to be closed to shellfishing. The Providence Journal reported: “In the more than 15 years officials have tested for [domoic acid], Rhode Island . . . never had a bloom reaching dangerous levels.” In March of 2017, Rhode Island was forced, once again, to institute emergency shellfish closures in Narragansett Bay—stuff that did not used to happen before this—when algae produced dangerous levels of domoic acid.

This may seem funny to my western colleagues, but people make their living doing this stuff, so it is not funny to us in Rhode Island when climate change is warming our oceans and creating these risks. Harmful algae blooms have also been advised for ponds in Portsmouth, Cranston, Greenville, and Tiverton.

In all of these ways—from heat-related illnesses, to respiratory disease, to allergies, to tick- and mosquito-borne illnesses, to toxic algae blooms—climate change has serious and wide-ranging effects on public health. Rhode Island's Department of Health has done an excellent service with this report—in helping Rhode Islanders learn how to be aware and to protect themselves. It was supported, by the way, by a grant from the CDC, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in its Climate and Health Program. It was a small \$10 million program, but it helped this project's report come to fruition in Rhode Island. We appreciate it. It is a wise investment to help prepare Americans for unfamiliar diseases that are being driven into our neighborhoods by a change in climate.

As I conclude, I know that there are colleagues here who do not care to listen to environmental groups, but they might want to listen to the American Medical Association. The American Medical Association writes: “Scientific

surveys have shown clear evidence that our patients are facing adverse health effects associated with climate change.”

Colleagues might listen to the American Lung Association, which writes: “Climate change seriously threatens our wellness—especially our lung health.”

Perhaps colleagues might consider the opinion of the American Academy of Pediatrics, which writes: “Tackling climate change could be the greatest global health opportunity of the 21st century.” They write that because here is the problem: “Climate change poses threats to human health, safety, and security, and children are at particularly high risk.”

We may disagree about a lot around here, but when the American Academy of Pediatrics is telling us that climate change poses serious threats to human health, safety, and security and that children are at particularly high risk, it is a very callous thing to pay no attention. It is time to wake up. Our constituents' health and well-being actually does hang in the balance, and this Rhode Island report shows it for our State at least.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Rhode Island for his leadership and his outspokenness—how he has shown the importance of the Senate actually doing its job on both climate change and campaign finance and how much they are related to each other because of the stranglehold the oil industry has on the Republican Party and the hundreds of millions of dollars they spend. Senator WHITEHOUSE has been on this floor well over 100 times to talk about that. The country certainly listens, and the country is, certainly, in the same place he is and a lot of us are. Unfortunately, the special interest groups in this town continue to control this Senate.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. President, right now, American manufacturers and American workers are not competing on a level playing field with foreign competitors. The Export-Import Bank is a vital tool for manufacturers in Ohio. In other States, it is helping them export Ohio products around the world. It is helping them compete in the global marketplace. Yet, for an unbelievable 3 years, the Export-Import Bank has been forced to stop most of its work.

I am joined on the floor today by Senator HEITKAMP of North Dakota, who will make the case, as I do, that it makes no sense that some special interest groups have stopped and some ideology way out in right field has stopped the Senate from doing its job with the Export-Import Bank.

Over these 3 years, 95 export credit agencies around the globe, including China's massive export credit agencies, have been aggressively helping foreign

competitors win sales and the jobs that come with them—jobs that would be in the United States but that don't exist in this country—if the administration and the Republican Congress would do their job and move forward on the Export-Import Bank.

China provides more credit every 2 years than the Export-Import Bank has in its 80-year history. If Congress is serious about ensuring American businesses stay competitive, we have to have a functional export-import credit agency, but this Congress has done the opposite. It starved the Bank of the nominees it needs to function, it has crippled its ability to support American jobs for no reason that anybody can figure out. Right now, the Export-Import Bank under law can't finance any transaction worth more than \$10 million because under the law, if it doesn't have a quorum, it can't do that.

The Bank's opponents in the Senate have spent years blocking votes on Board nominees because they want to kill the Bank. It is a small minority of Members of this Senate and the House, but they have had their way with their parliamentary tricks. Every additional day of delay means lost contracts in Ohio, North Dakota, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Oklahoma, and lost contracts mean lost jobs and additional costs to taxpayers. Without new transactions, the Bank will not be able to self-finance its operations.

If the Bank is fully reopened, it expects to return more than \$600 million to the Treasury, meaning more jobs, more businesses, more tax revenues, but we are not doing it.

Tomorrow the Ex-Im Bank will begin its annual conference. Senior officials from the administration, including Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross and White House National Trade Council Director Peter Navarro will be in attendance. Why are they there? They played no role in keeping the Export-Import Bank functioning. This meeting is usually an opportunity for American exporters to learn about how Ex-Im can help them grow their business.

I have dozens of those companies. There are some big ones like GE, large businesses such as Boeing. Both do a lot of business in my State, provide a lot of jobs, but it is the smaller companies that most people in this Chamber—I have heard of them because I work with them—but most people in this Chamber haven't heard of these small companies that benefit.

Instead, the Bank tomorrow will have to warn American companies that it is prohibited from doing its work. The Bank is hobbled. There will not be a single member of the Board of Directors to represent the Bank at its own conference. Why? Because we haven't confirmed any of them.

To businesses in Ohio, this makes no sense. They don't understand why President Trump will not do anything about it. He has refused. They don't understand why Senator McConnell will not do anything about this. He has refused.

Dozens of American goods are not being manufactured and sold because the Bank is crippled. American companies sit on the sidelines.

Ohio is the home to GE Aviation, which designs and builds the most advanced commercial aircraft engines in the world. Senator PORTMAN and I have both seen the work they do. Senator PORTMAN, my Republican colleague in Ohio, is very supportive of the Bank. He and I have seen up close this plant and their incredible technology. They build the best aircraft engines in the world. GE Aviation supports 24,000 workers in Alabama, Kentucky, New Hampshire, North Carolina, and Mississippi. That doesn't include the thousands of workers who are their supplier partners. They all risk losing business because their foreign competitors have a tool they don't.

GE can offer the best workforce, the best technology, but without the Export-Import Bank, they can't match the financing the foreign airline gets from the United Kingdom when they buy Rolls Royce engines. GE is far from alone. Many manufacturers, as I said, are being hurt.

When Ex-Im was fully operational, it provided \$20 billion in financing to American companies and supported nearly 165,000 jobs. These are generally good-paying union manufacturing jobs. Maybe that is part of the problem. They are union jobs, and I know the opponents of Export-Import Bank aren't wild about union jobs.

This past fiscal year that financing was cut by more than two-thirds. The Bank supports 40,000 jobs. It went from 165,000 before to 40,000 now. That is why the demand for reopening the Bank is overwhelming—the National Association of Manufacturers, the chamber of commerce, the Aerospace Industries Association—one after another after another—the Ohio Manufacturers' Association and small business across the country.

President Trump last year said he wanted the Bank to get back to work, but he nominated somebody who was determined to kill the Bank. We voted down that nomination with a bipartisan vote, and we supported four others who wanted and believed in the Export-Import Bank and wanted to make it work.

Let's deliver for American businesses and American workers. Let's reopen the Bank. Let's make sure the Bank supports another 125,000 jobs. We can't wait any longer. The Senate has waited 4 months. Senator McConnell doesn't seem to want to move on this. President Trump doesn't want to do anything about this. There are \$44 billion in transactions at the Bank that need Board approval. All of these opportunities for job creation and all these opportunities for growing American businesses could be lost.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Ex-

ecutive Calendar Nos. 579 and 580, Spencer Bachus; No. 581, Judith Pryor; No. 582, Kimberly Reed; No. 583 and 584, Claudia Slacik; and No. 585, Mark Greenblatt; that the Senate proceed to vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD, and the President be notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I have long advocated for profound reform of the Export-Import Bank. My preference has long been that the U.S. administration—in fact, this was an obligation of the previous administration which it chose to ignore—but that the U.S. administration negotiate among our trading partners a mutual phaseout of these taxpayer-subsidized export entities.

My objection to this is the embedded taxpayer subsidy, the embedded taxpayer risk in every transaction the Ex-Im does. The special interest I am defending here today is the American taxpayer.

Now, I am pretty sure I am not going to change anyone's mind on the floor tonight, so let me just make clear about where we are with these nominees. During the Banking Committee hearings, I and other colleagues made it clear. I would support the nominees to fill the vacancies on the Board provided that a reformer such as Scott Garrett was included among them. I would have supported restoring the quorum with the confidence that there would have been at least a good-faith effort to begin the kind of reforms we need. Unfortunately, the committee chose not to advance Scott Garrett, who would have done, I think, a very good job bridging the gap between the opponents and proponents of Ex-Im Bank, but that was not to be.

Instead, Ex-Im supporters are now asking to confirm the remaining nominees but not include Scott Garrett, who has taken himself out of the running at this point, nor would it include any other person as President.

What would the consequences of this be if this unanimous consent request were agreed to? The Ex-Im Bank would constitute a quorum, would resume doing multimillion- and multibillion-dollar deals, all which would put taxpayers at risk and there would be no prospect of any meaningful reform.

I remain open to finding a new candidate who can lead Ex-Im and implement the kind of reforms that are needed, but that is not what is on the table at the moment, and until that time comes, I cannot support the confirmation of these additional Board members, which would reconstitute the quorum; therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I am disappointed that we can't confirm the Ex-Im nominees today. I know many other Senators want to resolve this situation.

I will continue to push to reopen the Ex-Im Bank.

We were willing—the majority of the Banking Committee was willing to flip and put Mr. Garrett as one of the members, one of the four members, and make Mr. Bachus, another former House Member, who is qualified and is a supporter of the Ex-Im Bank Chairman. We were willing to have Scott Garrett on this Board but not as Chairman because the Chairman sets the agenda. Mr. Garrett would not, when questioned by Senator HEITKAMP, who asked him tough questions, would not commit to the committee that he wasn't out to destroy and undermine the Bank. We were willing to put Mr. Garrett there, just not in the Chairman's position. It is clear Mr. Garrett, on behalf of the Vice President and a small number of Members of this body, want to undermine and destroy the Ex-Im Bank. There is no question about that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I would like to point out that included in the list of nominees who my colleague from Ohio asked unanimous consent for confirmation, was the inspector general for the Export-Import Bank. That is a different function. That is a function I supported in committee, and I would support today. As far as I am aware, there is no objection whatsoever on this side of the aisle and no objection to confirming the inspector general to this post. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 585; that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I reserve the right to object.

Mr. President, how does it make sense to confirm an inspector general for an agency that really isn't an agency that is actually in operation doing its best? So we are not going to appoint the members of the Board. We will have zero Board members. They will not be able to conduct the quality and the quantity of business that they used to, and that they could if we had no objection to the motion earlier, and then we are going to have an inspector gen-

eral to watch over them? That simply doesn't make sense.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I am here representing a special interest group called the workers of America.

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield for a unanimous consent request?

Ms. HEITKAMP. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of remarks by our leader, Mr. MCCONNELL, I be recognized for 45 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I would like to insert an opportunity to speak for 5 minutes after Senator MCCONNELL and then yield to the Senator from Oklahoma for 45 minutes.

Mr. INHOFE. I have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the request, as modified, is agreed to.

The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Thank you, Mr. President.

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

I just want to say I am representing a special interest group, too, the workers of this country—the workers who have lost jobs because we do not have a functioning Ex-Im Bank; the workers whose opportunity to earn a living has been compromised because we don't have an Ex-Im Bank that is functioning; the workers who are now handed a big 50-pound weight against a Chinese worker, when the Chinese are pumping money into their export agencies and competing unfairly because we don't have an Ex-Im Bank.

Can we just for a minute be for the workers?

The Ex-Im Bank does not cost the taxpayer and has not cost the taxpayer a dime. In fact, it returns money to the Treasury. It is a win-win, but yet here we are, based on strictly ideological grounds, arguing the value of the Ex-Im Bank.

My colleague from Pennsylvania said he wants reform. I will state that we passed an effort I led in order to reauthorize the Ex-Im Bank. That was a big fight. That was not a little deal; that was a big fight. In fact, we had to hold up votes on TPA so we could get a commitment on reauthorizing the Ex-Im Bank because you can't authorize trade agreements and then take away an integral part and necessary part of the trade structure, which is the Ex-Im Bank.

So let me state, all of these reforms that we agreed to were critical, such as the appointment of a chief ethics officer, appointment of a chief risk officer, forming the risk management committee—pretty important to carry out responsibility.

Guess why these reforms aren't being done. Because we don't have a functioning Ex-Im Bank. We do not have what we need to get these actions approved. So when we go through this whole process and we begin to talk about this and we say this is about reform—no, it is not. Is this about saving the taxpayers money? No, it is not. This is about an ideology. This is about third-party interest groups making this their chief whipping boy, inappropriately, and stopping American jobs.

We are in some pretty tough times right now with China, potentially in a trade war, with the potential to really, I think, hurt our country moving forward for decades to come—think about that—at a time when we are trying to drive this economy into the 21st century to provide an opportunity for us to actually win in trade.

Now, I like to tell young people who come into my office: If you don't remember anything else that I have talked about, remember the number five—five. Now, 95 percent of the people on this Earth do not live in this country. If we are not trading with them, if we are not aggressively using every tool in the toolbox to reach out and trade with them, we are going to lose. We are not going to lose just in the next 2, 3, or 4 years, but we are going to lose a whole generation of opportunity and get left behind.

So it is time for us to step up and get a fully functioning Ex-Im Bank. How do we do that? Well, we approve the four nominees whom Ranking Member BROWN has advanced and who have been stopped. The four nominees are incredibly well qualified. They had a great hearing. The Presiding Officer sits on that committee with me and knows how incredibly qualified they are. Yet, because of a minority opinion, we are held off again.

We don't have a Bank that is working, and the people who work for that Bank, who have developed relationships, developed expertise, they have waited too long. We are losing every day. We are losing this piece of trade infrastructure that is absolutely critical to the competition for American businesses.

Let's talk about what we are up against. The lack of the Ex-Im Bank board quorum has left \$44 billion of exports on the table. They can't get approved because we don't have a quorum. OK, so it is a big number. Do you know what is a bigger number? When you take that and you translate it into American jobs, there are a quarter of a million American jobs that are going to be lost, that are going to be diverted to other countries because we are in this petty squabble right here with a minority group of people.

I want to add some other pieces. Every day that passes without a quorum, Congress is risking these deals, so let me tell you about some of these deals. Mack Trucks can't export Pennsylvania-manufactured vehicles to Cameroon. A U.S. engineering company

can't build a highway in Mozambique. A major petrochemical company in Egypt is on hold, and an energy project in Mozambique cannot be finalized. Hoffman International, a small business in New Jersey, can't finalize a deal with the Government of Cameroon.

If we are not trading, we are losing in this country. And if we don't have an Ex-Im Bank, we don't have a fully functioning trade apparatus. That is truth. So it is time to put aside this petty squabble.

I want to remark briefly that when we started the reauthorization effort, I was told: There is no way; you can't get the majority opinion.

The Ex-Im Bank got almost 70 votes here—almost 70 votes for reauthorization. When it went over to the House, where we were told once again that we could never get the political support for reauthorization, that it is too toxic, too high profile, guess what—well, 70 percent of the House of Representatives voted for the Ex-Im Bank.

We are being held captive. There are 250,000 American workers being held captive by an ideology that is going to fail us and doom our export effort to failure for not just the next couple of years but for a generation to come. The whole while, do you know what China is doing? When China's growth took a little dip, they pumped even more billions of dollars into their ex-im bank, into their ex-im credit agency. Do you think they did that because they thought it was a worthless gesture? No. They did it because they knew they could compete against us.

Let's not fail these 250,000 workers. Let's not fail to be smart in our competition with China. Let's get this done. The only way to get it done is to get a quorum on the Ex-Im Bank, and the only way to get a quorum is to break the deadlock that is here, stop leading with ideology, start leading with common sense, and start leading with the opportunity to respond to one of the most significant special interests groups in this country; that is, the American workers.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SENATE NATO OBSERVER GROUP

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today the Democratic leader and I are

proud to reestablish the Senate NATO Observer Group. The group was originally established in 1997 to provide a focal point for addressing NATO issues that cut across committee jurisdictions and to help educate Senators on the issues involved in any decision to enlarge NATO and to permit close interaction between the executive branch and the Senate during negotiations on NATO enlargement. Following the Senate's ratification of the protocols of accession in April 1998, the group ceased to function until it was reestablished on June 17, 2002. Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota and Minority Leader Trent Lott of Mississippi announced the formation of a new Senate NATO Observer Group to follow NATO's decision to formally invite additional new countries to join the Alliance at the Prague Summit. In his floor announcement, Senator Daschle said the bipartisan Senate NATO Observer Group would "advise the full Senate" on NATO and the next round of NATO enlargement. The Senate NATO Observer Group remained active through 2007, but was ultimately disbanded due to a lack of NATO enlargement rounds.

In arguing for reestablishment of the group, Senators TILLIS and SHAHEEN wrote to Senator SCHUMER and I that: "Exactly 10 years ago Estonia was one of the first countries to come under attack from Russia's modern form of hybrid warfare. In 2007, Russia conducted massive cyber-attacks on Estonia in response to Estonia's decision to relocate a Soviet Red Army memorial in Tallinn. One year later, as talks of eventual NATO membership for Georgia were debated, Russia activated its famed little green men in Georgia, invaded, and eventually occupied the Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. These regions are under Russian occupation to this day."

In 2014, Ukraine befell a similar fate as Russia instigated a conflict, resulting in the occupation of Crimea and continued bloodshed in Ukraine's Donbass or eastern region. Since April 2014, when war erupted in eastern Ukraine, more than 10,000 people have died, a number which is steadily rising. Despite successive attempts at international negotiations and peace, the Kremlin grew more aggressive in its stance and, in 2016, expanded its malign efforts into Western Europe and the United States.

During the 2016 U.S. Presidential elections, U.S. intelligence agencies were able to conclude that Russia interfered in the U.S. elections using a combination of hybrid tools. A similar pattern soon emerged across NATO states, where the Kremlin used both cyber attacks and disinformation to sow chaos and mistrust in Western democracies. Given these newfound challenges, increased engagement and assistance for transatlantic security was elevated as a critical priority for the Senate, as well as successive administrations.

The 2018 Senate NATO Observer Group will mirror the structure and make-up of previous Senate NATO Observer Groups with eight Members serving ex officio, the two leaders plus the chairman and ranking member of the Appropriations, Armed Services, and Foreign Relations Committees. In addition, the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Intelligence Committee would also be invited to serve as ex-officio members. Senators SHAHEEN and TILLIS, both Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, would be named the cochairs, and a small group of Senators active on NATO issues would be named to the group jointly by the leaders and cochairs.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today I am pleased to join my colleague the Republican leader in reestablishing the Senate NATO Observer Group. In the late 1940s, under the stewardship of President Harry Truman, the United States led our Western allies in the creation of an unprecedented arrangement to provide for our collective defense. Since then, NATO has guaranteed the security of our European allies and has come to our aid, protecting the United States in its darkest hours following the 9/11 attacks. Today, new threats are emerging from Russia and along NATO's southern border, making the alliance more necessary than ever. It is the responsibility of the Senate to be kept abreast of any and all factors affecting such a key component of our national defense.

The Senate NATO Observer group was first established in 1997 and oversaw the enlargement of our alliance to countries recently freed from Soviet domination in Eastern Europe. Following the reestablishment of the group in 2002 by Majority Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota and Minority Leader Trent Lott of Mississippi, the Senate NATO Observer group had an oversight role during the NATO mission in Afghanistan—again, the only time a NATO member has invoked the right to collective self-defense.

Unfortunately, since talks of further enlargement of the alliance expired 10 years ago, the Senate Observer Group lapsed. Since that time, Russia has reasserted itself in Eastern Europe through the aggressive use of hybrid warfare, including cyber infiltration of our allies' political infrastructure, as well as our own. While Georgia considered eventual NATO membership, Russia invaded and occupied South Ossetia and Abkhazia, regions which remain in Russian hands today. A similar fate befell Ukraine in 2014, when Russia's "little green men" were inserted into a civil conflict that spilled over into a civil war in which thousands of people died.

As we learned during the 2016 Presidential election, the Kremlin's aggressive posture extends far beyond Russia's borders. American intelligence agencies have shown conclusively that Russia has interfered in elections at

home and abroad using a sophisticated array of cyber attacks and disinformation to undermine confidence in the American political process and in Western democracy writ large. Neither the United States nor our NATO allies are immune from such attacks. That is why it is imperative that we continue to invest in and strengthen that alliance. Moreover, it is why the U.S. Senate must be actively involved in ensuring that our most important alliance remains alert to the serious issues before us.

There are several pressing issues on which the observer group will immediately begin work on. NATO recently established a naval command for the Atlantic, dedicated to ensuring the freedom of the seas, a policy the United States has steadfastly upheld since the early days of the republic. In addition to an increased focus on protecting the sea lanes between Europe and North America, a new NATO logistics command and a cyber operations center are being formed in response to the continued aggressive posture of Russian forces along NATO's eastern border. Cyber defense in particular should be of acute interest to Senators in this group. Russian cyber attacks have damaged countries around the world and continue to threaten critical infrastructure in the United States. I look forward to learning how NATO will integrate each nation's cyber defense knowledge into its own and how we might learn from our allies about how best to protect ourselves from cyber warfare.

This Congress began with a unanimous vote reaffirming the United States' commitment to article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. There can be no doubt that the Senate remains firmly committed to transatlantic security and to countering the malign influence of a hostile Kremlin at home and abroad. The opportunity to learn from our allies and prepare for the future is too important. So I am glad that my colleagues Senators SHAHEEN and TILLIS have spearheaded the reestablishment of the NATO Observer Group, on which they will serve as cochairs.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such

annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 18-06, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Mexico for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$1.2 billion. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

GREGORY M. KAUSNER,
(For Charles W. Hooper,
Lieutenant General, USA, Director).
Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 18-06

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Mexico.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment * \$.8 billion.
Other \$.4 billion.
Total \$1.2 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Eight (8) MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopters, equipped with:

Twenty (20) T-700 GE 401 C Engines (16 installed and 4 spares).

Sixteen (16) APS-153(V) Multi-Mode Radars (8 installed, 8 spares).

Ten (10) Airborne Low Frequency System (ALFS) (8 installed and 2 spares).

Twelve (12) AN/AAS-44C Multi-Spectral Targeting Systems Forward Looking Infrared Systems (8 installed, 4 spares).

Twenty (20) Embedded Global Positioning System/Inertial Navigation Systems (EGI) with Selective Availability/Anti-Spoofing Module (16 installed and 4 spares).

Thirty (30) AN/AVS-9 Night Vision Devices.

One thousand (1,000) AN/SSQ-36/53/62 Sonobuoys.

Ten (10) AGM-114 Hellfire Missiles.

Five (5) AGM-114 M36-E9 Captive Air Training Missiles.

Four (4) AGM-114Q Hellfire Training Missiles.

Thirty eight (38) Advanced Precision Kill Weapons System (APKWS) II Rockets.

Thirty (30) Mk -54 Lightweight Hybrid Torpedoes (LHTs).

Twelve (12) M-240D Machine Guns.

Twelve (12) GAU-21 Machine Guns.

Non-MDE: Also included are twelve (12) AN/ARC-220 High Frequency radios; fourteen (14) AN/APX-123 Identification Friend or Foe Transponders (8 installed and 6 spares); spare engine containers; facilities study, design, and construction; spare and repair parts; support and test equipment; communication equipment; ferry support; publications and technical documentation; personnel training and training equipment; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistical and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (MX-P-SAA).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: April 18, 2018

* As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Mexico—MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopters

The Government of Mexico has requested to buy eight (8) MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopters, equipped with: twenty (20) T-700 GE 401 C engines (16 installed and 4 spares); sixteen (16) APS-153(V) Multi-Mode radars (8 installed, 8 spares); ten (10) Airborne Low Frequency Systems (ALFS) (8 installed and 2 spares); fourteen (14) AN/APX-123 Identification Friend or Foe transponders (8 installed and 6 spares); twelve (12) AN/AAS-44C Multi-Spectral Targeting Systems Forward Looking Infrared Systems (8 installed, 4 spares); twenty (20) Embedded Global Positioning System/Inertial Navigation Systems (EGI) with Selective Availability/Anti-Spoofing Module (16 installed and 4 spares); thirty (30) AN/AVS-9 Night Vision Devices; one thousand (1,000) AN/SSQ-36/53/62 Sonobuoys; ten (10) AGM-114 Hellfire missiles; five (5) AGM-114 M36-E9 Captive Air Training missiles; four (4) AGM-114Q Hellfire training missiles; thirty eight (38) Advanced Precision Kill Weapons System (APKWS) II rockets; thirty (30) Mk 54 Lightweight Hybrid Torpedoes (LHTs); twelve (12) M-240D machine guns; twelve (12) GAU-21 Machine Guns. Also included are twelve (12) AN/ARC-220 High Frequency radios; spare engine containers; facilities study, design, and construction; spare and repair parts; support and test equipment; communication equipment; ferry support; publications and technical documentation; personnel training and training equipment; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistical and program support. The total estimated value is \$1.20 billion.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a strategic regional partner. Mexico has been a strong partner in combating organized crime and drug trafficking organizations. The sale of these aircraft to Mexico will significantly increase and strengthen its maritime capabilities. Mexico intends to use these defense articles and services to modernize its armed forces and expand its existing naval and maritime support of national security requirements and in its efforts to combat criminal organizations.

The proposed sale will improve Mexico's ability to meet current and future threats from enemy weapon systems. The MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopter will enable Mexico to perform anti-surface and antisubmarine warfare missions and secondary missions including vertical replenishment, search and rescue, and communications relay. Mexico will use the enhanced capability as a deterrent to regional threats and to strengthen its homeland defense. Mexico will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be Lockheed Martin Rotary and Mission Systems in Owego, New York. There are no known offset agreements in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require the assignment of additional U.S.

Government and/or contractor representatives to Mexico.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 18-06

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopter focuses primarily on anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare missions. The MH-60R carries several sensors and data links to enhance its ability to work in a network centric battle group as an extension of its home ship/main operating base. The mission equipment subsystem consists of the following sensors and subsystems: an acoustics systems consisting of a dipping sonar and sonobuoys, Multi-Mode Radar (MMR) with integral Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) interrogator, Electronic Support Measures (ESM), Integrated Self-Defense (ISD), and Multi-Spectral Targeting System (MTS). Also, Night Vision Devices (AN/AVS-9) for CONOPS and interoperability with USN. It can carry AGM-114A/B/K Hellfire missiles, as well as Mk 46/54 torpedoes to engage surface and sub-surface targets. The Mexican MH-60R platform will include provisions for the Mk 54 light weight torpedo. The MH-60R weapons system is classified up to SECRET. Unless otherwise noted below, MH-60R hardware and support equipment, test equipment, and maintenance spares are UNCLASSIFIED except when electrical power is applied to hardware containing volatile data storage. Technical data and documentation for MH-60R weapons systems (including sub-systems and weapons listed below) are classified up to SECRET. The sensitive technologies include:

a. The AGM-114 HELLFIRE missile is an air-to-surface missile with a multi-mission, multi-target, precision strike capability. The HELLFIRE can be launched from multiple air platforms and is the primary precision weapon for the United States Army. The highest level for release of the AGM-114 HELLFIRE is SECRET, based upon the software. The highest level of classified information that could be disclosed by a proposed sale or by testing of the end item is SECRET; the highest level that must be disclosed for production, maintenance, or training is CONFIDENTIAL. Reverse engineering could reveal CONFIDENTIAL information. Vulnerability data, countermeasures, vulnerability/susceptibility analyses, and threat definitions are classified SECRET or CONFIDENTIAL.

b. Advanced Precision Kill Weapons System (APKWS) II laser guided rocket to counter the fast attack craft and fast inshore attack craft threat. APKWS hardware is UNCLASSIFIED.

c. The light-weight hybrid air launched torpedo (Mk 54 LHT) is for surface and sub-surface targets. The acquisition of Mk-54 LHT will include ancillary equipment and publications.

d. Communications security devices contain sensitive encryption algorithms and keying material. The purchasing country has previously been released and utilizes COMSEC devices in accordance with set procedures and without issue. COMSEC devices will be classified up to SECRET when keys are loaded.

e. Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) (KIV-78) contains embedded security devices containing sensitive encryption algorithms and keying material. The purchasing country will utilize COMSEC devices in accordance with set procedures. The AN/APX-123 is classified up to SECRET.

f. GPS/PPS/SAASM—Global Positioning System (GPS) provides a space-based Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) that has reliable location and time information in all weather and at all times and anywhere on or near the earth when and where there is an unobstructed line of sight to four or more GPS satellites. Selective Availability/Anti-Spoofing Module (SAASM) (AN/PSN-11) is used by military GPS receivers to allow decryption of precision GPS coordinates. The GPS hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. When electrical power is applied, the system is classified up to SECRET.

g. Acoustics algorithms are used to process dipping sonar and sonobuoy data for target tracking and for the Acoustics Mission Planner (AMP), which is a tactical aid employed to optimize the deployment of sonobuoys and the dipping sonar. Acoustics hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. The acoustics system is classified up to SECRET when environmental and threat databases are loaded and/or the system is processing acoustic data.

h. The AN/APS-153 multi-mode radar with an integrated IFF and Inverse Synthetic Aperture (ISAR) provides target surveillance/detection capability. The AN/APS-153 hardware is unclassified. When electrical power is applied and mission data loaded, the AN/APS-153 is classified up to SECRET.

i. The AN/ALQ-210 (ESM) system identifies the location of an emitter. The ability of the system to identify specific emitters depends on the data provided by the Mexican Navy. The AN/ALQ-210 hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. When electrical power is applied and mission data loaded, the AN/ALQ-210 system is classified up to SECRET.

j. The AN/AAS-44C Forward Looking Infrared Radar (FLIR) uses the Multi-spectral Targeting System (MTS) that allows it to operate in day/night and adverse weather conditions. Imagery is provided by an Infrared sensor, a color/monochrome DTV, and a Low-Light TV. The AN/AAS-44C hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. When electrical power is applied, the AN/AAS-44C is classified up to SECRET.

k. Satellite Communications Demand Assigned Multiple Access (SATCOM DAMA), which provide increased, interoperable communications capabilities with US forces. SATCOM DAMA hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. When electrical power is applied and mission data loaded these systems are classified up to SECRET.

2. All the mission data, including sensitive parameters, is loaded from an off board station before each flight and does not stay with the aircraft after electrical power has been removed. Sensitive technologies are protected as defined in the program protection and anti-tamper plans. The mission data and off board station are classified up to SECRET.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures which might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that the recipient country can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to Mexico.

I AM FOR THE CHILD DAY

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the first annual I am for the Child Day on April 18, 2018, sponsored by the Wisconsin Court Appointed Special Advocates, CASA, Association and the National CASA Association. April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and Wisconsin CASA champions the needs of abused and neglected children. Over 6,000 Wisconsin children are in foster care; yet only 690 are assigned trained volunteers who can advocate for their safety and well-being while under the protection of the courts and child welfare agencies. The goal of the first annual I am for the Child Day is to raise awareness about the need for volunteers and the crippling impacts of child abuse and neglect on vulnerable children. I am proud to honor the WI CASA organization and the dedicated volunteers whose voice can speak for these children.

The Wisconsin CASA Association is a charitable, nonprofit member of the National CASA Association network. The association supports local programs throughout the State of Wisconsin in La Crosse, Vernon, Monroe, Brown, Marinette, Outagamie, Rock, Columbia, Dane, Manitowoc, Sauk, and Milwaukee Counties. Court appointed special advocates are community volunteers who champion the needs of abused and neglected children. They are sworn "friends of the court" acting under the jurisdiction of an appointing judge. Their work strengthens outcomes for children involved in an overstrained social welfare system. They provide advocacy for children's health, safety, emotional and physical development, family interaction, education, faith, recreation, and the cultural continuity that children need to thrive.

These volunteers interact with parents, caregivers, siblings, extended family members, foster parents, teachers, counselors, and healthcare providers to monitor the children's educational progress and social development. Their observations ultimately cultivate important recommendations for the court. Research shows that CASA volunteers strengthen outcomes for children, enhance child safety, reduce time spent in foster care, and improve the services the children receive.

CASA organizations are accelerating their advocacy by designating April 18 as the first annual I am for the Child Day with the goal of bringing awareness to child abuse everywhere and to help these children navigate a tumultuous life experience. Once again, I commend the Wisconsin Court Appointed Special Advocates Association on their admirable work and look forward to celebrating their accomplishments in the future.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL FLEAGLE

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President. I would like to say a few words about a

former member of my staff, Mike Fleagle, who has recently left my office and, unfortunately for Alaska, accepted a job in Colorado.

Mike was one of the very first people to join my team when I took office in 2014. I lured Mike away from his great job as the facilities maintenance supervisor for Alaska's largest city and was honored that he wanted to join me in serving our fellow Alaskans.

When you meet Mike, it doesn't take long to see the thoughtfulness and kindness by which he lives his life and treats others. He has a can-do attitude and an incredible knowledge base for so many important issues for Alaskans: aviation, rural affairs, transportation, energy, and subsistence. He brought to our office a trove of knowledge about hunting and fishing that he obtained in his 14 years of experience as chairman and member of Alaska's Board of Game and the Federal Subsistence Board, in addition to being a lifelong outdoorsman.

Mike was a true pleasure to have on the team. He loves Alaska and that always showed in the excellent quality of his work. Mike loves to hunt, fish, and hike, and he loves his family and is a devoted husband and father.

We will miss Mike very much, and I am very grateful for the time he spent in my office helping Alaskans.

TRIBUTE TO KATE O'CONNOR

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I would like to say a few words about Kate O'Connor, a former member of my staff who recently left to pursue another opportunity in public service.

She is now working at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, where she will continue her focus on telecommunications and information policy.

Kate was one of the first staffers I hired after being sworn in to the Senate in January 2015.

She started as a legislative correspondent and was integral in establishing and managing our constituent correspondence system. Her talent, work ethic, and interest in Alaska elevated her to a legislative assistant, where she oversaw issues related to the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, as well as education and healthcare.

Kate understood firsthand the unique challenges Alaska faces, particularly in regard to broadband deployment and reliable internet access. She played a critical role in helping to usher an Alaska specific plan through the FCC, a plan that will help bridge the digital divide by bringing more advanced broadband services to rural Alaska.

It was during her time at the University of Chicago, where she was pursuing a bachelor's of arts in public policy from the university, when she ventured north to my great State of Alaska for an internship in Juneau.

She fell in love with my State, as so many people do, and I am confident

that she will go on to be a great ambassador for Alaska.

Kate's positive attitude, her work ethic, and her love for Alaska will definitely be missed. I wish her all the best.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING CLEAR CHANNEL OUTDOOR-LAS VEGAS

• Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, today I am honored to congratulate the dedicated staff at Clear Channel Outdoor, in Las Vegas, NV, for earning the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI, Director's Community Leadership Award. On April 20, 2018, representatives from Clear Channel Outdoor will join the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Washington, DC, to formally accept this much-deserved recognition.

The FBI's special agents in 56 field offices work closely with the community to conduct investigations and to protect the American people from crimes and acts of extremism. In appreciation, special agents in FBI field offices nominate community leaders and organizations that exemplify their values and those who work tirelessly to assist them in their work to keep the community safe. The Director's Community Leadership Award honors these individuals and organizations for their leadership in combating crime, terrorism, drugs, and violence in America. Earning this award is no easy feat.

This award recognizes Clear Channel Outdoor-Las Vegas for their steadfast efforts to provide digital billboard services that assisted law enforcement in generating thousands of leads and tips, following the tragic and senseless loss of life at the Route 91 Festival on October 1, 2017, in Las Vegas. Clear Channel Outdoor-Las Vegas donated billboard space on digital signs around the city of Las Vegas to expand law enforcement's reach, telling the community, "If you see something, say something."

In Las Vegas, the October 1 tragedy shocked our community but also spurred us to action. During that dark time, Las Vegans came together to drop off food and water at the Family Reunification Center, donate blood, and build beautiful memorials to honor those killed. I am proud of how our community came together, of how law enforcement acted to protect lives and ensure that residents and visitors felt protected following such a tragic incident. I am also proud of the Clear Channel Outdoor-Las Vegas staff, who joined as part of our community effort, answering the call to assist local law enforcement and educate our community at large. Clear Channel Outdoor-Las Vegas's actions helped rebuild and strengthen the bonds that make Las Vegas the beautiful place we call home.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Clear Channel Outdoor-Las Vegas for their generosity, their eager-

ness, and their empathy in helping their fellow citizens and for their endeavors to help our home heal from this senseless tragedy. I celebrate the FBI's recognition of Clear Channel Outdoor-Las Vegas, and I am proud of their work on behalf of law enforcement and the State of Nevada.●

TRIBUTE TO GERARD "JERRY" LACHANCE

• Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, this month, I am proud to recognize Gerard "Jerry" Lachance of Sandown, NH, as our Granite Stater of the Month in honor of his incredible dedication to supporting our veterans.

At 70 years old, Jerry is currently on a more than 2,000-mile journey by bike from Florida to the northernmost tip of New Hampshire to raise funds for Project Hero, a nonprofit that builds adaptive bikes and helps support veterans and first responders impacted by injury and posttraumatic stress disorder.

Jerry, an avid cyclist for 12 years, a volunteer firefighter of more than 20 years for the Sandown Fire Rescue, and a Vietnam veteran, wanted to find a way to give back and support the brave servicemembers he considers to be his heroes. During one of Project Hero's honor rides, Jerry met a veteran who lost his leg during his service. The veteran was using an adaptive bike that he received from Project Hero, which inspired Jerry to do more to help the organization.

In 2016, Jerry biked from the New Hampshire-Canadian border to Key West, FL, with the goal of raising \$5,000, but his community was so inspired by Jerry's ride that he ended up raising \$25,000 for Project Hero.

This year, over the course of his 40-day ride, Jerry hopes to raise another \$25,000 to support our veterans.

We owe our brave veterans and servicemembers a debt of gratitude that we can never truly repay, but we must try. Efforts like Jerry's are an example for all of us of the dedication and support we can give to those who have sacrificed bravely for our country.

Jerry Lachance has proven to be a shining example of how we can support our veterans, and he embodies the values and all-hands-on-deck spirit of the Granite State. I thank Jerry for both his own military service and his commitment to our veterans, and I am honored to recognize him as our Granite Stater of the Month.●

RECOGNIZING VERMONT MEALS ON WHEELS

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to recognize the extraordinary work of Vermont's Meals on Wheels programs. All across the State, hundreds of volunteers regularly deliver freshly cooked nutritious meals to thousands of seniors in their homes, many of whom otherwise might not have

enough to eat. These volunteers play a critically important role helping ensure that older Vermonters have access to adequate nutrition. That, in and of itself, is no small matter.

These volunteers do much more than just deliver a meal. They also provide invaluable social interaction and companionship for the seniors they visit, which goes a long way to combat the effects of isolation that many older Vermonters face, especially in rural areas. Without this social interaction, seniors are more likely to have feelings of loneliness and depression, which puts them at higher risk for dementia, chronic disease, falls, and hospitalization.

The regular visits serve another purpose as well. The volunteers routinely check to make sure that the seniors are safe, secure, and warm. They know each person they visit and recognize immediately if something doesn't seem right. It is no exaggeration to say that they have saved Vermonters' lives by checking when no one answers the door, taking the time to discover that someone had fallen and been injured.

Every single Meals on Wheels volunteer has my sincere appreciation for their remarkable work.

I would also like to recognize the caring and dedicated professionals that run Vermont's Meals on Wheel these programs, from the chefs who prepare the nutritious meals that the volunteers deliver, to the program staff who ensure that everything runs smoothly. Together, these agencies served more than 1 million meals in Vermont last year alone. They form an indispensable component of our social safety net for older Vermonters.

Last month was "March for Meals," when Meals on Wheels programs across the country expand their outreach to draw attention to the growing need for the services these agencies provide. I am enormously pleased that many of my Vermont staff rode along with Meals on Wheels volunteers across the State to see the wonderful work they are doing.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:18 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1512. An act to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide for the reissuance of Social Security account numbers to young children in cases where confidentiality has been compromised.

H.R. 4403. An act to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to protect personally identifiable information, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5192. An act to authorize the Commissioner of Social Security to provide confirmation of fraud protection data to certain permitted entities, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 115. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 7:15 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 167. An act to designate a National Memorial to Fallen Educators at the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1512. An act to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide for the reissuance of Social Security account numbers to young children in cases where confidentiality has been compromised; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 4403. An act to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to protect personally identifiable information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 5192. An act to authorize the Commissioner of Social Security to provide confirmation of fraud protection data to certain permitted entities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following concurrent resolutions were discharged from the Committee on the Budget pursuant to Section 300 of the Congressional Budget Act, and placed on the calendar:

S. Con. Res. 36. Concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2019 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2020 through 2028.

S. Con. Res. 37. Concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2019 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2020 through 2028.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4921. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Sustainment) transmitting, pursuant to law, the National Defense Stockpile (NDS) Annual Materials Plan (AMP) for fiscal year 2019 and the succeeding four years, fiscal years 2020 - 2023; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4922. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Sustainment), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Secretary of Defense entering into an agreement with a Federally Funded Research Development Center (FFRDC) to provide an independent analysis of the feasibility of developing a budget request for the full Future Years Defense Program (FYDP); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4923. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Joseph P. DiSalvo, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4924. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Admiral Harry B. Harris, Jr., United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4925. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Kenneth E. Tovo, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4926. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting legislative proposals relative to the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4927. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "2018 Fiscal-year Blended Tax Rates for Corporations" (Rev. Proc. 2018-38) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 17, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4928. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Interim Notice regarding the post-enactment application of Rev. Proc. 2004-34" (Rev. Proc. 2018-35) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 17, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4929. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Depreciation Deductions for Passenger Automobiles" (Rev. Proc. 2018-25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 17, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4930. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicare Program; Contract Year 2019 Policy and Technical Changes to the Medicare Advantage, Medicare Cost Plan, Medicare Fee-for-Service, the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Programs, and the PACE Program" (RIN0938-AT08) (CMS-4182-F) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 12, 2018; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4931. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, two reports relative to the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (the New START Treaty) (OSS-2018-0460); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4932. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Italy to support the final assembly and check-out facility of F-35 aircraft in the amount of

\$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 17-088); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4933. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) and (d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the manufacture of significant military equipment abroad and the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Israel to support the manufacture, integration, installation, operation, testing, maintenance, and repair of the 120mm GPS Phase 1 and (SAL/GPS) Phase 2 Dual Mode Mortar in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 17-087); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4934. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms and accessories abroad controlled under Category I of the United States Munitions List to Saudi Arabia in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 17-054); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4935. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to the United Arab Emirates for integration and installation into military vehicles in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 17-009); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4936. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to the United Arab Emirates Armed Forces to provide training, maintenance, and engineering support on AT-802U and S2R-660 Archangel border patrol aircraft in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 16-081); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4937. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to the United Kingdom Ministry of Defense to support the assessment, demonstration, and manufacture phase of the Scavenger/PROTECTOR Program and the subsequent follow on phases in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 17-080); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4938. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rules of Practice for Protests and Appeals Regarding Eligibility for Inclusion in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Center for Verification and Evaluation Database" (RIN3245-AG87) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 17, 2018; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

S. 2113. A bill to amend title 41, United States Code, to improve the manner in which Federal contracts for design and construction services are awarded, to prohibit the use of reverse auctions for design and construction services procurements, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-231).

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments:

S. 2413. A bill to provide for the appropriate use of bridge contracts in Federal procurement, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-232).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. ISAKSON for the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

*Joseph L. Falvey, Jr., of Michigan, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims for the term of fifteen years.

*Paul R. Lawrence, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Benefits of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 2692. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4558 Broadway in New York, New York, as the "Stanley Michels Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 2693. A bill to clarify the status and enhance the effectiveness of immigration courts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. TESTER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. BALDWIN, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2694. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to lengthen the statute of limitations for enforcing robocall violations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. UDALL, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2695. A bill to require additional disclosures relating to donations to the Presidential Inaugural Committee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 2696. A bill to provide grants to States to improve and coordinate their response to

ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children at high risk for abuse and neglect; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 2697. A bill to require the awareness campaign regarding the risk of abuse of prescription opioids if such drugs are not taken as prescribed to include information about dispensing options; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2698. A bill to make necessary reforms to improve compliance with loss mitigation requirements by servicers of mortgages for single family housing insured by the FHA, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2699. A bill to amend title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require institutions of higher education that participate in programs under such title to distribute voter registration forms to students enrolled at the institution, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. WARREN:

S. 2700. A bill to provide emergency assistance to States, territories, Tribal nations, and local areas affected by the opioid epidemic and to make financial assistance available to States, territories, Tribal nations, local areas, and public or private non-profit entities to provide for the development, organization, coordination, and operation of more effective and cost efficient systems for the delivery of essential services to individuals with substance use disorder and their families; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 2701. A bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to carry out a pilot program to enhance the mapping of urban flooding and associated property damage and the availability of that mapped data to homeowners, businesses, and localities to help understand and mitigate the risk of such flooding, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. SCOTT (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. ROUNDS, and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 2702. A bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to clarify the authority of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection with respect to persons regulated by a State insurance regulator, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2703. A bill to authorize the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 2704. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of methadone under Medicare part B; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2705. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to expand and clarify the prohibition on inaccurate caller identification information and to require providers of telephone service to offer technology to subscribers to reduce the incidence of unwanted telephone calls and text messages, and for

other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. TESTER:

S. 2706. A bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to provide snow removal assistance to Indian tribes under a Federal emergency declaration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. NELSON (for himself and Mr. HELLER):

S. 2707. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide educational resources regarding opioid use and pain management as part of the Medicare & You handbook; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. UDALL):

S. 2708. A bill to provide for the establishment of Medicare part E public health plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. TESTER:

S. 2709. A bill to statutorily establish Operation Stonegarden, through which eligible law enforcement agencies shall be awarded grants for border security enhancement; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CARPER, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. NELSON, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. BROWN, Mr. COONS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WARNER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. REED):

S. Res. 473. A resolution expressing no confidence in the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and calling for the immediate resignation of the Administrator; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. JONES, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEE, Mr.

MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCOTT, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. SMITH, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. YOUNG):

S. Res. 474. A resolution relative to the death of the Honorable John Melcher, Senator from the State of Montana; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. BENNETT):

S. Res. 475. A resolution commemorating the 60th anniversary of the North American Aerospace Defense Command; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. BURR):

S. Res. 476. A resolution designating April 2018 as "National 9-1-1 Education Month"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. Con. Res. 36. A concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2019 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2020 through 2028; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. Con. Res. 37. A concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2019 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2020 through 2028; placed on the calendar.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 266

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 266, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Anwar Sadat in recognition of his heroic achievements and courageous contributions to peace in the Middle East.

S. 339

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 339, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 514

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 514, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide access to magnetic EEG/EKG-guided resonance therapy to veterans.

S. 994

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 994, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for

the protection of community centers with religious affiliation, and for other purposes.

S. 1121

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1121, a bill to establish a postsecondary student data system.

S. 1503

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1503, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

S. 1633

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1633, a bill to promote innovative approaches to outdoor recreation on Federal land and to open up opportunities for collaboration with non-Federal partners, and for other purposes.

S. 1703

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1703, a bill to amend section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to allow certain alien veterans to be paroled into the United States to receive health care furnished by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

S. 1704

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1704, a bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a veterans visa program to permit veterans who have been removed from the United States to return as immigrants, and for other purposes.

S. 1725

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1725, a bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to identify each alien who has served, or is serving, in the Armed Forces of the United States when any alien applies for an immigration benefit or is placed in an immigration enforcement proceeding, and for other purposes.

S. 1727

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1727, a bill to establish a naturalization office at every initial military training site.

S. 1730

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 1730, a bill to implement policies to end preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths globally.

S. 1857

At the request of Mrs. CAPITO, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1857, a bill to establish a compliance deadline of May 15, 2023, for Step 2 emissions standards for new residential wood heaters, new residential hydronic heaters, and forced-air furnaces.

S. 2038

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2038, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a presumption of herbicide exposure for certain veterans who served in Korea, and for other purposes.

S. 2061

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2061, a bill to further deployment of Next Generation 9-1-1 services to enhance and upgrade the Nation's 9-1-1 systems, and for other purposes.

S. 2488

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2488, a bill to amend title 37, United States Code, to exclude the receipt of basic allowance for housing for members of the Armed Forces in determining eligibility for certain Federal benefits, and for other purposes.

S. 2497

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2497, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Arms Export Control Act to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriations of funds to Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 2516

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2516, a bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a demonstration program to test alternative pain management protocols to limit the use of opioids in emergency departments.

S. 2565

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2565, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide child care assistance to veterans receiving certain training or vocational rehabilitation, and for other purposes.

S. 2680

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) were added as cosponsors of S. 2680, a bill to address the opioid crisis.

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2680, *supra*.

S. RES. 168

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 168, a resolution supporting respect for human rights and encouraging inclusive governance in Ethiopia.

S. RES. 407

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 407, a resolution recognizing the critical work of human rights defenders in promoting human rights, the rule of law, democracy, and good governance.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 2701. A bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to carry out a pilot program to enhance the mapping of urban flooding and associated property damage and the availability of that mapped data to homeowners, businesses, and localities to help understand and mitigate the risk of such flooding, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2701

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Flood Mapping Modernization and Homeowner Empowerment Pilot Program Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. FLOOD MAPPING MODERNIZATION AND HOMEOWNER EMPOWERMENT PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(2) COASTAL.—The term “coastal” means, with respect to a unit of general local government, that the unit borders a body of water that—

(A) is more than 2,000 square miles in size; and

(B) is not a river.

(3) PELAGIC.—The term “pelagic” means, with respect to a unit of general local government, that—

(A) the unit is a coastal unit; and

(B) the body of water that the unit borders is—

(i) an ocean; or

(ii) a large, open body of water, including a bay or a gulf, that empties into an ocean.

(4) PILOT PROGRAM.—The term “pilot program” means the pilot program carried out by the Administrator under this section.

(5) URBAN FLOODING.—The term “urban flooding”—

(A) means the inundation, by water, of property in a built environment, particularly in a densely populated area, that—

(i) is caused by falling rain—

(I) collecting on an impervious surface; or
(II) increasing the level of a body of water that is located near that built environment; and

(ii) overwhelms the capacity of drainage systems in the built environment, such as storm sewers;

(B) includes—

(i) a situation in which stormwater enters a building through a window, door, or other opening;

(ii) the backup of water through a sewer pipe, shower, toilet, sink, or floor drain;

(iii) the seepage of water through a wall or a floor;

(iv) the accumulation of water on property or a public right-of-way; and

(v) the overflow from a body of water, such as a river, lake, or ocean; and

(C) does not include flooding in an undeveloped or agricultural area.

(6) URBANIZED AREA.—The term “urbanized area” means an area that has been defined and designated as an urbanized area by the Bureau of the Census during the most recently completed decennial census.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator shall carry out a pilot program to make grants to units of local government to—

(1) enhance the production of maps relating to urban flooding and associated property damage; and

(2) increase the availability of the maps described in paragraph (1) to homeowners, businesses, and units of local government to enable those entities to minimize the risk of urban flooding.

(c) OBJECTIVES.—Amounts from grants made under the pilot program may be used only to carry out activities that meet the following objectives:

(1) Developing a methodology for assessing the risk of urban flooding through the deployment of technology-based mapping tools that—

(A) are easily understandable by the public; and

(B) effectively convey information regarding the level of flood risk.

(2) Providing structure-specific projections of annual chance flood frequency.

(3) Providing structure-based flood risk assessments.

(4) Providing program design for the mitigation of the risk of urban flooding.

(5) Incorporating information regarding climate trends into urban flooding risk assessments.

(6) Making the information described in this subsection publicly available on the Internet through a web-based portal so as to increase transparency regarding homeowner flood risks.

(d) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A grant under the pilot program may be made only to—

(A) a unit of general local government that is located in an urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 individuals; or

(B) a stormwater management authority of a unit of general local government described in subparagraph (A).

(2) ONE-TIME GRANTS.—A grant under the pilot program may not be made to—

(A) any unit of general local governmental, or the stormwater management authority of a unit of general local government, that previously received a grant under the pilot program;

(B) any unit of general local government if the stormwater management agency for that unit previously received a grant under the pilot program; or

(C) any stormwater management agency of a unit of general local government if that unit previously received a grant under the pilot program.

(3) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a stormwater management authority that operates with respect to more than 1 unit of general local government, the application of that authority shall be considered for purposes of paragraph (2) of this subsection and subsections (f), (g), and (h)(1) to be made for the largest unit of general local government with respect to which that authority operates.

(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subparagraph (A) may be construed to limit the ability of a stormwater management authority described in that subparagraph to carry out activities under a demonstration project in any other jurisdiction in, or with respect to any other unit of local government with, which that authority operates.

(e) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible for a grant under the pilot program, a unit of general local government or a stormwater management agency shall submit to the Administrator an application in such form and containing such information as the Administrator shall require.

(f) SELECTION OF RECIPIENTS.—

(1) ANNUAL SELECTION.—Subject to paragraph (2), and to the submission of approvable applications, in each fiscal year for which amounts are made available for grants under the pilot program, the Administrator shall select, from among applications submitted under subsection (e) for that fiscal year, 3 units of general government or stormwater management authorities to receive grants under the pilot program.

(2) AGGREGATE LIMIT.—Subject only to the submission of approvable applications, the Administrator shall select, in the aggregate over the entire duration of the pilot program, 12 units of general government or stormwater management authorities to receive grants under the pilot program, as follows:

(A) TIER 1.—3 of the applicants selected shall be units of general local government, or stormwater management authorities for those units, each of which has a population of more than 800,000 individuals, as follows:

(i) PELAGIC COASTAL CITY.—One shall be—

(I) a unit of general local government that is a pelagic unit; or

(II) a stormwater authority for a unit described in subclause (I).

(ii) NON-PELAGIC COASTAL CITY.—One shall be—

(I) a unit of general local government that—

(aa) is a coastal unit; and

(bb) is not a pelagic unit; or

(II) a stormwater authority for a unit described in subclause (I).

(iii) NON-COASTAL CITY.—One shall be—

(I) a unit of general local government that is not a coastal unit; or

(II) a stormwater authority for a unit described in subclause (I).

(B) TIER 2.—Six of the applicants selected shall be units of general local government, or stormwater management authorities for such units, each of which has a population that is more than 200,000 individuals and not more than 800,000 individuals, as follows:

(i) COASTAL CITIES.—Three shall be—

(I) units of general local government that are coastal units; or

(II) stormwater management authorities for units described in subclause (I).

(ii) NON-COASTAL CITIES.—Three shall be—

(I) units of general local government that are not coastal units; or

(II) stormwater management authorities for units described in subclause (I).

(C) TIER 3.—Three of the applicants selected shall be—

(i) units of general local government, each of which has a population that is more than 50,000 individuals but not more than 200,000 individuals; or

(ii) stormwater management authorities for units described in clause (i).

(g) PRIORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall select applicants for grants under the pilot program based on the extent to which the applications of those applicants shall achieve the objectives described in subsection (c).

(2) TIERS 2 AND 3.—In selecting applicants to receive grants under the pilot program under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subsection (f)(2), the Administrator shall give priority to applicants—

(A) that are highly vulnerable to sea level rise;

(B) within which are located a military installation or another facility relating to national security concerns; or

(C) that have—

(i) populations that are highly vulnerable to urban flooding; and

(ii) an uneven capacity for flood mitigation and response efforts resulting from socioeconomic factors.

(h) AMOUNT.—

(1) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining the amount of a grant under the pilot program, the Administrator shall consider the population of the grant recipient, which may be considered in terms of the tier under subsection (f)(2) with respect to the recipient.

(2) FEDERAL SHARE.—The amount of a grant under the pilot program may not exceed 75 percent of the total cost incurred in carrying out the activities described in subsection (c).

(i) DURATION.—The Administrator shall require each recipient of a grant under the pilot program to complete the activities described in subsection (c), which shall be, subject to subsection (h)(2), carried out using the grant amounts, not later than 18 months after the date on which the recipient initially receives the grant amounts under the pilot program.

(j) USE OF CENSUS DATA.—The Administrator shall make all determinations regarding population under the pilot program by using data from the most recently completed decennial census by the Bureau of the Census.

(k) GRANTEE REPORTS TO FEMA.—Each recipient of a grant under the pilot program shall, not later than 30 months after the date on which the recipient initially receives the grant amounts, submit to the Administrator a report that describes—

(1) the activities carried out with the grant amounts;

(2) how the activities carried out with the grant amounts have met the objectives described in subsection (c);

(3) any lessons learned in carrying out the activities described in paragraph (2); and

(4) any recommendations for future mapping modernization efforts by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(l) BIENNIAL REPORTS BY FEMA.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and not less frequently than once every 2 years thereafter until the date on which all activities carried out with amounts from grants under the pilot program are completed, the Administrator shall submit to Congress and make available to the public on an Internet website a report that—

(1) describes—

(A) the progress of the activities carried out with amounts from those grants; and

(B) the effectiveness of technology-based mapping tools used in carrying out the activities described in subparagraph (A); and

(2) with respect to the final report that the Administrator is required to submit under this subsection, includes recommendations to Congress and the executive branch of the Federal Government for implementing strategies, practices, and technologies to mitigate the effects of urban flooding.

(m) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that, because the pilot program is limited with respect to scope and resources, communities that participate in the pilot program should acknowledge that the most successful efforts to mitigate the effects of urban flooding—

(1) take a structural-based mitigation approach with respect to construction, which includes—

(A) recognizing any post-storm damage that may occur; and

(B) pursuing designs that proactively minimize future flood damage;

(2) make individuals in the community aware, through any cost-effective and available means of education, of the best approaches regarding the construction of properties that are able to survive floods, which reduces the cost of future repairs; and

(3) encourage home and property owners to consider the measures described in paragraphs (1) and (2), which are the most cost-effective and prudent ways to reduce the impact of flooding, when constructing or renovating building components.

(n) FUNDING.—There are authorized to be appropriated for grants under the pilot program—

(1) \$1,200,000 for fiscal year 2019; and

(2) \$4,300,000 for fiscal year 2020, to remain available through 2022.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2703. A bill to authorize the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2703

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program Authorization Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

For the purposes of this Act—

(1) the term “firearms offenses” means an offense under section 922 or 924 of title 18, United States Code;

(2) the term “Program” means the Project Safe Neighborhoods Block Grant Program established under section 3; and

(3) the term “transnational organized crime group” has the meaning given such term in section 36(k)(6) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2708(k)(6)).

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT.

The Attorney General of the United States is authorized to establish and carry out a program, to be known as the “Project Safe Neighborhoods Block Grant Program” within the Office of Justice Programs at the Department of Justice.

SEC. 4. PURPOSE.

(a) PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM.—The purpose of the Program is to foster and improve existing partnerships between Federal, State, and local

agencies, including the United States Attorney in each Federal judicial district, entities representing members of the community affected by increased violence, victims' advocates, and researchers to create safer neighborhoods through sustained reductions in violent crimes by—

(1) developing and executing comprehensive strategic plans to reduce violent crimes, including the enforcement of gun laws, and prioritizing efforts focused on identified subsets of individuals or organizations responsible for increasing violence in a particular geographic area;

(2) developing evidence-based and data-driven intervention and prevention initiatives, including juvenile justice projects and activities which may include street-level outreach, conflict mediation, provision of treatment and social services, and the changing of community norms, in order to reduce violence; and

(3) collecting data on outcomes achieved through the Program, including the effect on the violent crime rate, incarceration rate, and recidivism rate of the jurisdiction.

(b) **ADDITIONAL PURPOSE AREAS.**—In addition to the purpose described in subsection (a), the Attorney General may use funds authorized under this Act for any of the following purposes—

(1) competitive and evidence-based programs to reduce gun crime and gang violence;

(2) the Edward Byrne criminal justice innovation program;

(3) community-based violence prevention initiatives; or

(4) gang and youth violence education, prevention and intervention, and related activities.

SEC. 5. RULES AND REGULATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall promulgate rules to create, carry out, and administer the Program in accordance with this section.

(b) **FUNDS TO BE DIRECTED TO LOCAL CONTROL.**—Amounts made available as grants under the Program shall be, to the greatest extent practicable, locally controlled to address problems that are identified locally.

(c) **REGIONAL GANG TASK FORCES.**—30 percent of the amounts made available as grants under the Program each fiscal year shall be granted to established Regional Gang Task Forces in regions experiencing a significant or increased presence of, or high levels of activity from, transnational organized crime groups posing threats to community safety in terms of violent crime, firearms offenses, human trafficking, drug trafficking, and other crimes.

(d) **PRIORITY.**—Amounts made available as grants under the Program shall be used to prioritize the investigation and prosecution of individuals who have an aggravating or leadership role in a criminal organization.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General to carry out the Program \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2021.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. UDALL):

S. 2708. A bill to provide for the establishment of Medicare part E public health plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, the most important words of our Constitu-

tion are the first three words: "We the people." That is the mission statement of our Constitution.

Our Founders did not seek to design a government that would enable the powerful and the privileged to make rules to benefit themselves. They didn't say: We want to have a Constitution that enables the wealthy and the well-connected to take away the riches of this country at the expense of the people. No, they laid out the vision "We the people." They put that mission statement in supersized font, so even if you were reading the Constitution from across the room, you would understand its core mission—a core mission that unfortunately has been sabotaged in the Citizens United decision, which, instead of pursuing government of, by, and for the people, instead of providing what Jefferson called the equal voice, mother principle of America—that each citizen should have an equal voice—proceeds to give the powerful the reins of power through unlimited third-party campaign spending.

The corruption of our democracy is in full gear, and we see it through the bills that are coming to this floor—bills to wipe out healthcare for 22 to 30 million Americans, a bill that passed that borrows \$1.5 trillion from our children and proceeds to give that money virtually entirely—more than 80 percent—to the very richest Americans. I encourage my colleagues to think about how we have a responsibility under our oath of office to fight for this vision of America, not a corrupted "we the powerful" vision of America.

As we address the issues that people care about at the kitchen table, it comes down to four basic things. It comes down to education, housing, living-wage jobs, and healthcare. Eisenhower said: "Because the strength of our nation is in its people, their good health is a proper national concern."

We have worked to design improved healthcare systems, lower costs, higher quality, and improved accessibility. We have come a long way through the ACA, the expansion of Medicaid, and the establishment of competitive marketplaces for insurance. Indeed, in Oregon, we reduced the uninsured rate from 15 percent to 5 percent. That is a huge stride forward. We increased our resources in our rural healthcare clinics, our rural hospitals, and our urban healthcare clinics and our urban hospitals. We strengthened the healthcare system, but it is not enough. We still have 41 million adults in this country who are underinsured. We have 30 million who remain completely uninsured.

That is why, today, I am delighted to join with my colleague Senator CHRIS MURPHY to introduce the Choose Medicare Act. Every American deserves the promise of access to a popular, affordable, high-quality healthcare option. Fortunately, we have such an option. It is called Medicare. It is time-tested. It is well-vetted. It is admired and desired by our seniors.

Today, CHRIS MURPHY and I are introducing the Choose Medicare Act, which creates a Medicare option for all, putting consumers and businesses in the driver's seat on the pathway to universal healthcare. With the Choose Medicare Act, we affirm that here in America, healthcare is not a privilege for the wealthy and well-connected. It is a right and a fundamental value to have healthcare for all.

I am pleased that we have been joined in introducing this today with nine of our colleagues as original cosponsors: Senator BALDWIN, Senator BLUMENTHAL, Senator BOOKER, Senator HARRIS, Senator HEINRICH, Senator SHAHEEN, Senator SCHATZ, Senator GILLIBRAND, and Senator UDALL. Thank you to each and every one of these original cosponsors, who believe in the vision of improving our healthcare system.

We appreciate the groups that worked to help forge this vision to put meat on the bones of this idea: PCCC, which was involved from the very beginning with insights, CREDO, Daily Kos, Democracy for America, MoveOn, and Families USA. We appreciate their endorsement of this plan.

When we were talking about Medicare for All, many folks said: How do you create the transition? And back during the ACA discussions, we did debate reducing the age of Medicare to 55. We had 60 votes for it in a week but lost our 60th vote.

We wrestled with this vision. How do you create the transition? Well, folks come to my townhalls—and I hold a lot of them. I have held well over 300 during the 10 years I have been serving in the Senate. They come and say: We have this great healthcare plan, Medicare. Why can't we buy into it? Why not give us the advantage of its efficiency and cost control, its low-administrative costs and high-quality healthcare?

That is exactly what CHRIS MURPHY and I are putting forward along with our cosponsors—that vision of a Medicare option for all. That is a "we the people" bill. That is not a bill for the powerful and privileged. That is not government by the wealthy and well-connected. This is about the fundamental issue people wrestle with around the kitchen table—the complexity and the cost of our healthcare system. I am on Medicaid today, but I have earned a little too much, so am I off? How do I get on the exchange in the middle of the year? How do I sign up for those tax credits? What if I don't get that right? What if the correspondence gets lost in the mail or misfiled, which seems to happen? Why can't we have a simple, seamless system?

Well, we have one—Medicare. Folks say: Why can't we participate? You can, if we pass this bill. It makes sense to create this public option competitor. What we have seen for States that have a public option in their provision for workplace insurance is that the costs come down dramatically. That certainly happened in my home State of

Oregon. It happened on the other coast in Rhode Island. It has happened around this country.

Lyndon Johnson, when he signed the bill for Medicare, said:

It calls upon us never to be indifferent toward despair. It commands us never to turn away from helplessness. It directs us never to ignore or to spurn those who suffer untended in a land that is bursting with abundance.

Medicare is high-quality coverage for 58 million Americans. It has bargaining power, low administrative costs, and high respect by participants.

What does the Choose Medicare Act do? Well, it covers all that Medicare covers today, and then, because it would be open to people of all ages, it throws in pediatric and reproductive healthcare and builds those networks. It strengthens the exchanges by strengthening the tax credits so that the middle class is not stranded when it comes to the affordability of healthcare. It extends those tax credits from 400 percent of poverty to 600 percent of poverty, reaching further into the middle class to make that transition—to make healthcare affordable on the exchange. It strengthens, certainly, Medicare itself, by putting a cap on the out-of-pocket costs.

For all those who are in traditional Medicare, their Medicare improves as well. It provides the ability to drive down the cost of drugs by giving Medicare the ability to negotiate those prices. That is certainly a very important feature.

Here we have something that is very popular with the public. When the public is asked "Would you like to see the opportunity for every single American to be able to buy into Medicare, have that as an option; it is a voluntary option, but an option," overwhelmingly, they say yes. Democrats say yes. Republicans say yes. Independents say yes. They would like to have that option. The more they learn about how a public option has driven down costs, the more they say that this is needed.

We not only make it possible to buy it on the exchange, we make it possible for self-insured companies to take advantage of Medicare. We make it possible for employers in regular companies, who are buying other healthcare plans for their employees, to consider buying a Medicare plan. So this reach is broad and deep.

That is the type of "we the people" legislation we should be considering on the floor of this Senate—not a healthcare bill designed to destroy healthcare for 22 to 30 million people, as we saw last year courtesy of our majority, not a plan to borrow \$1.5 trillion from our children and to give it away to the very richest Americans, the biggest, boldest bank heist seen in American history—perhaps in world history. That is the type of bank heist you would expect out of corrupt, Third World governments, not here in the United States of America, which tells you just how corrupt our election proc-

ess has become, with Citizens United allowing unlimited billionaire dollars into our campaign system.

We have to fight to take back the vision of our Nation, the "we the people" vision of our Nation. It has been stolen. It has been corrupted, and we have to take it back. When we take it back, we are going to put bills on the floor of this Senate that are about the fundamentals for families, living-wage jobs, public education and public college education, affordable quality classrooms, and the cost of housing, which is completely out of reach, and, certainly, profound substantial improvements to our healthcare system.

Again, I thank CHRIS MURPHY for partnering in this project. I supported BERNIE SANDERS' Medicare for All, and I love that vision. CHRIS MURPHY supported BRIAN SCHATZ's bill to be able to buy into Medicaid. We don't have an identical healthcare profile, but what we sought together is the option of buying into Medicare, which is a complete win for the American people and a complete win for our healthcare system.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 473—EX-PRESSING NO CONFIDENCE IN THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AND CALLING FOR THE IMMEDIATE RESIGNATION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CARPER, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. NELSON, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. Kaine, Mr. BROWN, Mr. COONS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WARNER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. REED) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works:

S. RES. 473

Whereas the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (referred to in this preamble as the "Administrator") is a key position in the Executive Branch;

Whereas the mission of the Environmental Protection Agency (referred to in this preamble as the "Agency") is to protect human health and the environment;

Whereas the Agency is vested by law with the principal responsibility for controlling and abating pollution in the areas of air, water, land, hazardous waste, noise, radiation, and toxic substances;

Whereas Scott Pruitt, as Administrator, has misused taxpayer dollars by spending those taxpayer dollars on excessive personal conveniences and unnecessary office enhancements while dramatically cutting budgets and staff for critically important en-

forcement, research, and implementation activities;

Whereas, under Administrator Pruitt—

(1) the Agency is hemorrhaging staff and experts needed to protect the health, safety, and livelihood of millions of people of the United States, with more than 700 employees of the Agency having left or been forced out of the Agency during his tenure as Administrator;

(2) the Agency is seeking to shrink staff of the Agency by 3,200 employees (or roughly 20 percent of the workforce of the Agency of about 15,000), which would make it difficult to implement the mission of the Agency; and

(3) top officials of the Agency have been granted permission to also work for private companies while employed by the Agency, creating major conflicts of interest with their positions at the Agency;

Whereas, by delaying the effective date of regulations, easing enforcement of existing regulations, and delaying implementation of new regulations, Administrator Pruitt is helping polluters at the expense of the health, safety, and livelihood of millions of people of the United States;

Whereas Administrator Pruitt has failed to exercise the enforcement authorities of the Agency, which are necessary to the fulfillment of the mission of the Agency, and has hampered career officials and experts from efficiently doing their jobs without political interference by issuing a memorandum that required regional offices of the Agency to first seek permission from Agency headquarters before—

(1) investigating potential pollution violations;

(2) requesting information from potential violators; or

(3) requiring additional monitoring from companies suspected of violations;

Whereas Administrator Pruitt has continually overridden the recommendations of the scientists of the Agency in order to provide relief to industry, leaving in place the use of harmful chemicals, pesticides, and policies that are directly impacting the health and well-being of millions of people of the United States;

Whereas the Agency is expected to maintain and uphold unbiased scientific credibility, but Administrator Pruitt—

(1) has undertaken actions directly counter to the science-based mission of the Agency by working to undermine and censor science, scientists, and researchers;

(2) has skewed the membership of all advisory committees of the Agency by removing and barring highly qualified, independent scientists from those advisory committees if the scientist has received grants from the Agency, while allowing individuals who receive funding from industry to serve on those advisory committees; and

(3) is attempting to paralyze the ability of the Agency to set health-based pollution standards by restricting the use of scientific research by the Agency unless that research complies with criteria that are intentionally nearly impossible to meet;

Whereas Administrator Pruitt—

(1) has shielded his actions from the people of the United States, including by refusing to make his schedule public or provide justifications for his policy and rulemaking decisions, in a way not done by any previous Administrator; and

(2) has claimed unprecedented exemptions on the few requests under section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the "Freedom of Information Act"), from outside groups that the Agency has responded to, masking all but the most basic information about meetings, travel, and spending of Administrator Pruitt from the public;

Whereas Administrator Pruitt has lost the faith of the public through his continued undermining of basic ethics, particularly the ethics of impartiality (such as by renting a below-market priced room in a condominium owned by an energy lobbyist with clients who had interests that are regulated by the Agency), and is tarnishing the reputation of serving in public office at the Agency; and

Whereas, for the reasons described in this preamble, Scott Pruitt, as Administrator, has failed to faithfully discharge the functions of that office: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) Scott Pruitt should resign immediately from his post as Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; and

(2) the President should appoint to the office of Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency an individual who will be committed to the fulfillment of the mission of the Environmental Protection Agency and who is able to fully and faithfully discharge the public duties entrusted to the office of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

SENATE RESOLUTION 474—RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE JOHN MELCHER, SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF MONTANA

Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. HASSAN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. JONES, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCOTT, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. SMITH, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. YOUNG) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 474

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher was first elected to Congress in 1969 and served in the House of Representatives for more than 7 years until 1977 and in the Senate for 12 years until 1989;

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher served in the United States Army during

World War II and was part of the D-Day invasion of Normandy in June 1944;

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher received the Purple Heart, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, and the Bronze Star for his service;

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher graduated from veterinary school at Iowa State University in 1950, after which he moved with his family to Forsyth, Montana and established his own veterinary clinic;

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher served on the Forsyth city council starting in 1953 and served as mayor from 1955 to 1961 prior to serving as a State representative and State senator in Montana;

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher understood the value of public land and paved the way for future pieces of legislation to preserve the breathtaking landscapes of Montana;

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher passionately stood up for family farmers and ranchers in Montana and ensured his colleagues understood the importance of the agricultural sector; and

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher served with great humility, determination, integrity, and love of his family, the State of Montana, and the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the Senate—

(A) has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of the Honorable John Melcher, Senator from the State of Montana; and

(B) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate communicate this resolution to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to the family of the Honorable John Melcher; and

(2) when the Senate adjourns on the date of adoption of this resolution, it stands adjourned as a further mark of respect to the memory of the deceased Senator.

SENATE RESOLUTION 475—COMMEMORATING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND

Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 475

Whereas 2018 marks the 60th anniversary of the creation of the North American Aerospace Defense Command, commonly referred to as "NORAD";

Whereas the United States and Canada, bound together by history, values, economy, environment, and resolve to improve the lives people of both countries, have long enjoyed a close relationship that has allowed for continuous collaboration, building a prosperous future for the people of both countries;

Whereas the United States and Canada have stood shoulder to shoulder in defense of peace and security for more than 100 years, as partners and allies in World War I, World War II, the Korean War, throughout the Cold War, in Afghanistan, and as part of the global coalition against Daesh, working together to advance shared values of both countries;

Whereas, as indispensable allies in the defense of North America, on May 12, 1958, the United States and Canada signed an official agreement creating the binational North American Aerospace Defense Command and formally acknowledged the mutual commit-

ment of both countries to defend their citizens from air domain attacks;

Whereas this cooperation is an important element of United States and Canadian contributions to the collective defense provided by the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command enjoys a unique status as the only fully integrated binational military command;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command is headquartered at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, Colorado, with—

(1) 3 subordinate region headquarters located at—

(A) Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, for the Alaskan NORAD Region;

(B) Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, for the Continental NORAD Region; and

(C) Canadian Forces Base Winnipeg, Manitoba, for the Canadian NORAD Region; and

(2) 3 subordinate sector command centers at—

(A) Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, for the Western Air Defense Sector;

(B) Rome, New York, for the Eastern Air Defense Sector; and

(C) Canadian Forces Base North Bay, Ontario, for the Canadian Air Defense Sector;

Whereas the missions of the North American Aerospace Defense Command are to provide aerospace warning, aerospace control, and maritime warning to defend North America;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command and the current operations center of United States Northern Command are connected to a worldwide system of sensors that provides the Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command with a common operating picture of aerospace and maritime threats;

Whereas the Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station, Colorado, hosts the Alternate Command Center for both the North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command;

Whereas the Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command provides integrated tactical warning and attack assessments to the Government of the United States and the Government of Canada;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command detects, intercepts, and, if necessary, engages air domain threats to North America using—

(1) a network of space-based and ground-based sensors;

(2) airborne radars, fighters, and helicopters; and

(3) ground-based air defense systems;

Whereas the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of Canada on the North American Aerospace Defense Command, done at Ottawa April 28, 2006 (TIAS 06-512), added a maritime warning mission to the slate of responsibilities of the North American Aerospace Defense Command, which entails a shared awareness and understanding of the ongoing activities conducted in United States and Canadian maritime approaches, maritime areas, and inland waterways;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command provides continuous surveillance and defense of North American airspace from further airborne aggression or attack, as occurred on September 11, 2001, through the ongoing Operation Noble Eagle mission;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command will continue to evolve to address the ever-changing nature of the threats to North America and adapt to future shared security interests;

Whereas the outstanding service of United States and Canadian servicemembers from Active Duty and Reserve Component forces and civilians serving at North American Aerospace Defense Command is central to the ability of North America to confront and successfully defeat aerospace threats of the 21st century; and

Whereas the continuation of this successful relationship between the United States and Canada through the North American Aerospace Defense Command is paramount to the future security of the people of the United States and Canada: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the contributions made by the North American Aerospace Defense Command to the security of North America;

(2) commemorates 60 years of excellence and distinctive service by the men and women of the North American Aerospace Defense Command;

(3) reaffirms the critical missions of the North American Aerospace Defense Command headquartered at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, Colorado; and

(4) supports the role of the North American Aerospace Defense Command in providing binational defense of the United States and Canada in the 21st century.

SENATE RESOLUTION 476—DESIGNATING APRIL 2018 AS “NATIONAL 9-1-1 EDUCATION MONTH”

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. BURR) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 476

Whereas 9-1-1 is recognized throughout the United States as the number to call in an emergency to receive immediate help from law enforcement agencies, fire services, emergency medical services, and other appropriate emergency response entities;

Whereas, in 1967, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice recommended that a “single number should be established” nationwide for reporting emergency situations, and various Federal Government agencies and governmental officials supported and encouraged the recommendation;

Whereas, in 1968, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (commonly known as “AT&T”) announced that it would establish the digits 9-1-1 as the emergency code throughout the United States;

Whereas Congress designated 9-1-1 as the national emergency call number in the Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act of 1999 (Public Law 106-81; 113 Stat. 1286);

Whereas section 102 of the ENHANCE 911 Act of 2004 (47 U.S.C. 942 note) declared an enhanced 9-1-1 system to be “a high national priority” and part of “our Nation's homeland security and public safety”;

Whereas it is important that policymakers at all levels of government understand the importance of 9-1-1, how the 9-1-1 system works, and the steps that are needed to modernize the 9-1-1 system;

Whereas the 9-1-1 system is the connection between the eyes and ears of the public and the emergency response system in the United States and is often the first place emergencies of all magnitudes are reported, making 9-1-1 a significant homeland security asset;

Whereas nearly 6,000 9-1-1 public safety answering points serve more than 3,000 counties and parishes throughout the United States;

Whereas telecommunicators at public safety answering points answer more than 200,000,000 9-1-1 calls each year in the United States;

Whereas a growing number of 9-1-1 calls are made using wireless and Internet Protocol-based communications services;

Whereas a growing segment of the population of the United States, including individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing or who suffer from speech or language disorders, autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, or anxiety, is increasingly communicating with nontraditional text, video, and instant messaging communications services and expects those services to be able to connect directly to 9-1-1;

Whereas Next Generation 9-1-1 promises enhanced accessibility, interoperability, flexibility, and features, as well as network resiliency and reliability;

Whereas the growth in usage and diversification of means of communication to 9-1-1 services, including mobile and Internet Protocol-based systems, impose unique challenges for accessing 9-1-1 and, thus, require increased education and awareness about the emergency communications capabilities of these different methods of communication;

Whereas numerous other “N-1-1” and 800 number services exist for nonemergency situations, including 2-1-1, 3-1-1, 5-1-1, 7-1-1, 8-1-1, poison control centers, and mental health hotlines, and the public needs to be educated on when to use those services in addition to or instead of 9-1-1;

Whereas international visitors and immigrants make up an increasing percentage of the population of the United States each year, and visitors and immigrants may have limited knowledge of the emergency calling system in the United States;

Whereas people of all ages use 9-1-1, and it is critical to educate people on the proper use of 9-1-1;

Whereas senior citizens are highly likely to need to access 9-1-1 and many senior citizens are learning to use new technology;

Whereas thousands of 9-1-1 calls are made every year by children properly trained in the use of 9-1-1, which saves lives and underscores the critical importance of training children early in life about 9-1-1;

Whereas the 9-1-1 system is often misused, including by the placement of prank and nonemergency calls;

Whereas misuse of the 9-1-1 system results in costly and inefficient use of 9-1-1 and emergency response resources and needs to be reduced;

Whereas parents, teachers, and all other caregivers need to play an active role in 9-1-1 education for children, but can do so only after first being educated themselves;

Whereas there are many avenues for 9-1-1 public education, including safety fairs, school presentations, libraries, churches, businesses, public safety answering point tours or open houses, civic organizations, and senior citizen centers;

Whereas children, parents, teachers, and the National Parent Teacher Association make vital contributions to the education of children about the importance of 9-1-1 through targeted outreach efforts to public and private school systems;

Whereas the United States should strive to host at least 1 educational event regarding the proper use of 9-1-1 in every school in the country each year;

Whereas programs to promote proper use of 9-1-1 during National 9-1-1 Education Month could include—

(1) public awareness events, including conferences, media outreach, and training activities for parents, teachers, school administrators, other caregivers, and businesses;

(2) educational events in schools and other appropriate venues; and

(3) production and distribution of information about the 9-1-1 system designed to educate people of all ages on the importance and proper use of 9-1-1; and

Whereas the people of the United States deserve the best education regarding the use of 9-1-1: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2018 as “National 9-1-1 Education Month”; and

(2) urges governmental officials, parents, teachers, school administrators, caregivers, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and the people of the United States to observe the month with appropriate ceremonies, training events, and activities.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 36—SETTING FORTH THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019 AND SETTING FORTH THE APPROPRIATE BUDGETARY LEVELS FOR FISCAL YEARS 2020 THROUGH 2028

Mr. PAUL submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was placed on the calendar:

S. CON. RES. 36

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019.

(a) **DECLARATION.**—Congress declares that this resolution is the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2019 and that this resolution sets forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2020 through 2028.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this concurrent resolution is as follows:

Sec. 1. Concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2019.

TITLE I—RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS

Subtitle A—Budgetary Levels in Both Houses

Sec. 1101. Recommended levels and amounts.
Sec. 1102. Major functional categories.

Subtitle B—Levels and Amounts in the Senate

Sec. 1201. Social Security in the Senate.
Sec. 1202. Postal Service discretionary administrative expenses in the Senate.

TITLE II—RECONCILIATION

Sec. 2001. Reconciliation in the Senate.

TITLE III—RESERVE FUNDS

Sec. 3001. Deficit reduction fund for efficiencies, consolidations, and other savings.
Sec. 3002. Reserve fund relating to health savings accounts.

TITLE IV—BUDGET PROCESS

Sec. 4001. Voting threshold for points of order.
Sec. 4002. Emergency legislation.
Sec. 4003. Enforcement of allocations, aggregates, and other levels.
Sec. 4004. Point of order against legislation providing funding within more than 3 suballocations under section 302(b).
Sec. 4005. Duplication determinations by the Congressional Budget Office.
Sec. 4006. Breakdown of cost estimates by budget function.

Sec. 4007. Sense of the Senate on treatment of reduction of appropriations levels to achieve savings.

Sec. 4008. Prohibition on preemptive waivers.

Sec. 4009. Adjustments for legislation reducing appropriations.

Sec. 4010. Authority.

Sec. 4011. Exercise of rulemaking powers.

TITLE I—RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS

Subtitle A—Budgetary Levels in Both Houses

SEC. 1101. RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS.

The following budgetary levels are appropriate for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2028:

(1) **FEDERAL REVENUES.**—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution:

(A) The recommended levels of Federal revenues are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$2,590,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: \$2,736,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: \$2,845,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: \$2,990,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: \$3,164,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$3,338,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$3,513,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: \$3,807,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: \$4,058,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: \$4,230,000,000,000.

(B) The amounts by which the aggregate levels of Federal revenues should be changed are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: –\$1,800,000,000.

(2) **NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY.**—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution, the appropriate levels of total new budget authority are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$3,474,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: \$3,233,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: \$3,070,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: \$3,086,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: \$3,049,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$3,018,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$3,068,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: \$3,097,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: \$3,127,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: \$3,159,000,000,000.

(3) **BUDGET OUTLAYS.**—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution, the appropriate levels of total budget outlays are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$3,151,170,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: \$3,119,660,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: \$3,088,460,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: \$3,057,580,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: \$3,027,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$2,996,730,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$3,026,700,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: \$3,056,970,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: \$3,087,540,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: \$3,118,410,000,000.

(4) **DEFICITS.**—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution, the amounts of the deficits are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: –\$708,170,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: –\$550,660,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: –\$435,460,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: –\$290,580,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: –\$118,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$49,270,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$156,300,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: \$379,030,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: \$555,460,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: \$649,590,000,000.

(5) **PUBLIC DEBT.**—Pursuant to section 301(a)(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of

1974 (2 U.S.C. 632(a)(5)), the appropriate levels of the public debt are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$16,559,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: \$17,483,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: \$18,473,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: \$19,554,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: \$20,729,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$21,979,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$23,369,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: \$24,943,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: \$26,454,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: \$27,929,000,000,000.

(6) **DEBT HELD BY THE PUBLIC.**—The appropriate levels of debt held by the public are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$22,278,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: \$23,223,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: \$24,196,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: \$25,199,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: \$26,320,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$27,544,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$28,854,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: \$30,435,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: \$31,792,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: \$32,985,000,000,000.

SEC. 1102. MAJOR FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES.

Congress determines and declares that the appropriate levels of new budget authority and outlays for fiscal years 2019 through 2028 for each major functional category are:

(1) **National Defense (050):**

Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$728,697,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$678,276,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$660,632,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$660,658,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$676,312,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$664,529,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$692,752,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$681,476,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$709,588,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$689,183,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$726,971,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$698,885,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$744,692,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$720,771,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$762,838,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$738,346,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$781,485,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$756,358,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$801,504,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$780,743,000,000.

(2) **International Affairs (150):**

Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$64,431,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$48,945,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$65,994,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$53,737,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$66,600,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$57,679,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$65,230,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$60,253,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$66,750,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$62,465,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$68,424,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$64,300,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$69,986,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$65,812,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$71,603,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$67,379,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$726,971,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$698,885,000,000.

(A) New budget authority, \$744,692,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$720,771,000,000.

(A) New budget authority, \$762,838,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$738,346,000,000.

(A) New budget authority, \$781,485,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$756,358,000,000.

(A) New budget authority, \$801,504,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$780,743,000,000.

(2) **International Affairs (150):**

Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$64,431,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$48,945,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$65,994,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$53,737,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$66,600,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$57,679,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$65,230,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$60,253,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$66,750,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$62,465,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$68,424,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$64,300,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$69,986,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$65,812,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$71,603,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$67,379,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$73,243,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$68,920,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$74,887,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$70,533,000,000.

(3) **General Science, Space, and Technology (250):**

Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$32,740,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$32,054,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$33,488,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$32,708,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$34,287,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$33,452,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$35,089,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$34,251,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$35,897,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$35,052,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$36,762,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$35,901,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$37,602,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$36,729,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$38,445,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$37,562,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$39,321,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$38,406,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$40,209,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$39,279,000,000.

(4) **Energy (270):**

Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$4,528,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$3,318,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$5,096,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$4,104,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$4,910,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$4,340,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$3,601,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$3,100,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$3,325,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$2,491,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$3,385,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$2,504,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$3,415,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$2,542,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$3,226,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$2,358,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$3,263,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$2,599,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$5,965,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$5,306,000,000.

(5) **Natural Resources and Environment (300):**

Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$61,470,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$43,549,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$63,358,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$45,737,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$64,559,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$48,031,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$65,036,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$48,715,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$68,045,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$51,876,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$69,679,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$53,770,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$70,871,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$55,537,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$73,144,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$58,364,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$75,001,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$60,815,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$76,866,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$63,282,000,000.

(6) Agriculture (350):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$23,298,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$22,428,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$22,766,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$21,978,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$24,355,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$23,651,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$25,015,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$24,348,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$24,957,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$34,269,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$25,309,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$34,613,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$25,663,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$34,919,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$26,210,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$25,483,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$26,289,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$25,556,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$26,658,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$25,906,000,000.

(7) Commerce and Housing Credit (370):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$14,872,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$6,858,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$15,418,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$7,225,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$16,254,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$7,329,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$17,211,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$7,115,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$15,639,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$5,298,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$16,139,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$5,485,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$16,941,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$5,303,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$16,387,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$4,988,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$16,874,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$4,580,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$17,230,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$5,481,000,000.

(8) Transportation (400):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$97,591,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$95,044,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$92,360,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$97,971,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$93,359,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$100,252,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$94,376,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$102,552,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$95,381,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$104,527,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$96,430,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$106,561,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$97,474,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$108,958,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$98,513,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$111,165,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$99,592,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$113,347,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$100,694,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$115,454,000,000.

(9) Community and Regional Development (450):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$94,402,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$45,448,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$96,527,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$52,317,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$98,551,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$58,177,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$100,369,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$65,792,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$102,536,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$71,632,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$104,881,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$77,874,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$107,129,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$83,994,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$109,391,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$89,580,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$111,747,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$94,133,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$114,100,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$98,552,000,000.

(10) Education, Training, Employment, and Social Services (500):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$113,915,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$112,015,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$119,502,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$122,505,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$123,046,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$120,471,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$124,528,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$122,610,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$124,302,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$123,832,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$126,992,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$125,189,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$129,884,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$127,700,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$132,659,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$130,520,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$135,302,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$133,099,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$138,309,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$136,024,000,000.

(11) Health (550):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$591,976,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$577,105,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$615,248,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$593,448,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$635,103,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$618,465,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$675,763,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$655,391,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$708,406,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$689,210,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$732,919,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$725,742,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$770,809,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$763,995,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$811,032,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$803,094,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$852,990,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$845,612,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$892,330,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$888,883,000,000.

(12) Medicare (570):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$648,565,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$648,231,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$693,013,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$692,686,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$646,698,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$746,329,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$837,357,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$836,993,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$861,007,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$860,646,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$878,101,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$877,735,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$983,143,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$982,771,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$1,052,579,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$1,025,196,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$1,127,150,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$1,126,771,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$1,271,586,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$1,271,204,000,000.

(13) Income Security (600):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$527,870,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$519,077,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$539,364,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$529,959,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$55,766,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$546,954,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$578,382,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$575,912,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$588,808,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$581,459,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$598,211,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$585,933,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$618,261,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$606,904,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$633,569,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$628,222,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$634,354,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$625,722,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$655,156,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$652,253,000,000.

(14) Social Security (650):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$35,977,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$35,977,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2020:
 (A) New budget authority, \$39,035,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$39,035,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2021:
 (A) New budget authority, \$42,028,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$42,028,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2022:
 (A) New budget authority, \$45,053,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$45,053,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2023:
 (A) New budget authority, \$48,312,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$48,312,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2024:
 (A) New budget authority, \$51,893,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$51,893,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2025:
 (A) New budget authority, \$55,894,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$55,894,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2026:
 (A) New budget authority, \$66,328,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$66,328,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2027:
 (A) New budget authority, \$72,886,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$72,886,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2028:
 (A) New budget authority, \$78,066,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$78,066,000,000.
 (15) Veterans Benefits and Services (700):
 Fiscal year 2019:
 (A) New budget authority, \$192,838,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$192,108,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2020:
 (A) New budget authority, \$200,133,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$198,629,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2021:
 (A) New budget authority, \$207,549,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$205,736,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2022:
 (A) New budget authority, \$215,660,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$222,648,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2023:
 (A) New budget authority, \$222,313,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$220,784,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2024:
 (A) New budget authority, \$229,290,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$218,166,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2025:
 (A) New budget authority, \$237,747,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$235,727,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2026:
 (A) New budget authority, \$245,652,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$243,565,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2027:
 (A) New budget authority, \$235,852,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$251,684,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2028:
 (A) New budget authority, \$264,156,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$272,947,000,000.
 (16) Administration of Justice (750):
 Fiscal year 2019:
 (A) New budget authority, \$71,727,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$63,352,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2020:
 (A) New budget authority, \$64,842,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$66,645,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2021:
 (A) New budget authority, \$65,374,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$70,625,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2022:
 (A) New budget authority, \$67,015,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$71,369,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2023:
 (A) New budget authority, \$69,001,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$71,319,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2024:
 (A) New budget authority, \$70,862,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$71,297,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2025:
 (A) New budget authority, \$72,676,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$72,145,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2026:
 (A) New budget authority, \$74,281,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$73,728,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2027:
 (A) New budget authority, \$77,691,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$77,057,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:
 (A) New budget authority, \$84,842,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$84,118,000,000.
 (17) General Government (800):
 Fiscal year 2019:
 (A) New budget authority, \$27,557,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$24,853,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2020:
 (A) New budget authority, \$28,083,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$25,586,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2021:
 (A) New budget authority, \$28,734,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$25,853,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2022:
 (A) New budget authority, \$30,232,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$27,174,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2023:
 (A) New budget authority, \$30,271,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$27,233,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2024:
 (A) New budget authority, \$30,837,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$27,755,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2025:
 (A) New budget authority, \$32,075,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$28,735,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2026:
 (A) New budget authority, \$32,619,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$29,193,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2027:
 (A) New budget authority, \$33,435,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$29,931,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2028:
 (A) New budget authority, \$34,348,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$30,694,000,000.
 (18) Net Interest (900):
 Fiscal year 2019:
 (A) New budget authority, \$470,776,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$470,776,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2020:
 (A) New budget authority, \$564,099,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$564,099,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2021:
 (A) New budget authority, \$648,352,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$648,352,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2022:
 (A) New budget authority, \$719,672,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$719,672,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2023:
 (A) New budget authority, \$764,950,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$764,950,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2024:
 (A) New budget authority, \$799,781,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$799,781,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2025:
 (A) New budget authority, \$831,612,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$831,612,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2026:
 (A) New budget authority, \$907,391,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$907,391,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2027:
 (A) New budget authority, \$789,792,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$789,792,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2028:
 (A) New budget authority, \$834,173,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$834,173,000,000.
 (19) Allowances (920):
 Fiscal year 2019:
 (A) New budget authority, \$27,679,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$18,575,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2020:
 (A) New budget authority, \$48,134,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$19,403,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2021:
 (A) New budget authority, \$50,972,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$35,311,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2022:
 (A) New budget authority, \$54,331,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$47,988,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2023:
 (A) New budget authority, \$56,504,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$53,490,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2024:
 (A) New budget authority, \$59,623,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$58,510,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2025:
 (A) New budget authority, \$61,801,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$61,123,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$63,711,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$63,348,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2027:
 (A) New budget authority, \$66,015,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$65,559,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2028:
 (A) New budget authority, \$62,662,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$65,293,000,000.
 (20) New Efficiencies, Consolidations, and Other Savings (930):
 Fiscal year 2019:
 (A) New budget authority, \$426,137,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$308,812,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2020:
 (A) New budget authority, \$668,153,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$468,659,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2021:
 (A) New budget authority, \$882,483,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$647,654,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2022:
 (A) New budget authority, \$1,209,600,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$905,483,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2023:
 (A) New budget authority, \$1,331,706,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$1,069,229,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2024:
 (A) New budget authority, \$1,470,058,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$1,235,992,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2025:
 (A) New budget authority, \$1,712,029,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$1,443,138,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2026:
 (A) New budget authority, \$1,899,768,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$1,660,922,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2027:
 (A) New budget authority, \$2,064,040,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$1,840,142,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2028:
 (A) New budget authority, \$2,411,721,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$2,169,051,000,000.
 (21) Undistributed Offsetting Receipts (950):
 Fiscal year 2019:
 (A) New budget authority, \$81,989,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$81,989,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2020:
 (A) New budget authority, \$83,624,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$83,624,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2021:
 (A) New budget authority, \$85,942,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$85,942,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2022:
 (A) New budget authority, \$88,436,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$88,436,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2023:
 (A) New budget authority, \$88,048,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$88,048,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2024:
 (A) New budget authority, \$90,874,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$90,874,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2025:
 (A) New budget authority, \$100,925,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$100,925,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2026:
 (A) New budget authority, \$96,114,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$96,114,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2027:
 (A) New budget authority, \$98,827,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$98,827,000,000.
 Fiscal year 2028:
 (A) New budget authority, \$102,191,000,000.
 (B) Outlays, \$102,191,000,000.

Subtitle B—Levels and Amounts in the Senate

SEC. 1201. SOCIAL SECURITY IN THE SENATE.

(a) SOCIAL SECURITY REVENUES.—For purposes of Senate enforcement under sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633 and 642), the amounts of revenues of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$905,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: \$941,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: \$995,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: \$1,049,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: \$1,103,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$1,164,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$1,226,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: \$1,296,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: \$1,361,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: \$1,442,000,000,000.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY OUTLAYS.—For purposes of Senate enforcement under sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633 and 642), the amounts of outlays of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$897,332,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: \$955,095,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: \$1,015,309,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: \$1,079,773,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: \$1,147,889,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$1,219,609,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$1,293,326,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: \$1,370,789,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: \$1,451,789,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: \$1,539,941,000,000.

(c) SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—In the Senate, the amounts of new budget authority and budget outlays of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund for administrative expenses are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$5,627,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$5,831,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$5,759,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$5,685,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$5,906,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$5,837,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$6,057,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$5,975,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$6,236,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$6,142,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$6,424,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$6,331,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$6,616,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$6,522,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$6,816,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$6,718,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$7,023,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$6,922,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$7,246,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$7,186,000,000.

SEC. 1202. POSTAL SERVICE DISCRETIONARY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES IN THE SENATE.

In the Senate, the amounts of new budget authority and budget outlays of the Postal Service for discretionary administrative expenses are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$285,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$285,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$284,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$284,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$285,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$285,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$286,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$286,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$286,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$286,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$287,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$287,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$288,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$288,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$289,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$289,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$289,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$289,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$290,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$290,000,000.

TITLE II—RECONCILIATION

SEC. 2001. RECONCILIATION IN THE SENATE.

(a) AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY.—The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(b) ARMED SERVICES.—The Committee on Armed Services of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(c) BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS.—The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(d) COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION.—The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(e) ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES.—The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(f) ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS.—The Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(g) FINANCE.—

(1) DEFICIT.—The Committee on Finance of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(2) REVENUE.—The Committee on Finance of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce revenues by not less than \$18,600,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(h) FOREIGN RELATIONS.—The Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate shall re-

port changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(i) HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS.—The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(j) HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.—The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(k) INDIAN AFFAIRS.—The Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(l) INTELLIGENCE.—The Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(m) JUDICIARY.—The Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(n) RULES AND ADMINISTRATION.—The Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(o) VETERANS AFFAIRS.—The Committee on Veterans Affairs of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(p) SUBMISSIONS.—In the Senate, not later than June 20, 2018, the committees named in subsections (a) through (o) shall submit their recommendations to the Committee on the Budget of the Senate. Upon receiving such recommendations, the Committee on the Budget of the Senate shall report to the Senate a reconciliation bill carrying out all such recommendations without any substantive revision.

TITLE III—RESERVE FUNDS

SEC. 3001. DEFICIT REDUCTION FUND FOR EFFICIENCIES, CONSOLIDATIONS, AND OTHER SAVINGS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution, and make adjustments to the pay-as-you-go ledger, for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to efficiencies, consolidations, and other savings by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would reduce the deficit over the period of the total of fiscal years 2019 through 2023 and the period of the total of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

SEC. 3002. RESERVE FUND RELATING TO HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution, and make adjustments to the pay-as-you-go ledger, for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to health savings accounts by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes.

TITLE IV—BUDGET PROCESS**SEC. 4001. VOTING THRESHOLD FOR POINTS OF ORDER.**

(a) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term “covered point of order” means a point of order—

(1) under the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.), the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900 et seq.), or a concurrent resolution on the budget; and

(2) which, but for subsection (b), may be waived only by the affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn.

(b) **VOTING THRESHOLD.**—In the Senate—

(1) a covered point of order may be waived only by the affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn; and

(2) an affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a covered point of order.

SEC. 4002. EMERGENCY LEGISLATION.

(a) **AUTHORITY TO DESIGNATE.**—In the Senate, with respect to a provision of direct spending or receipts legislation or appropriations for discretionary accounts that Congress designates as an emergency requirement, by an affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn, in such measure, the amounts of new budget authority, outlays, and receipts in all fiscal years resulting from that provision shall be treated as an emergency requirement for the purpose of this section.

(b) **EXEMPTION OF EMERGENCY PROVISIONS.**—Any new budget authority, outlays, and receipts resulting from any provision designated as an emergency requirement, pursuant to this section, in any bill, joint resolution, amendment, amendment between the Houses, or conference report shall not count for purposes of sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633 and 642), section 4106 of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018, section 3101 of S. Con. Res. 11 (114th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, and sections 401 and 404 of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010. Designated emergency provisions shall not count for the purpose of revising allocations, aggregates, or other levels pursuant to procedures established under section 301(b)(7) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 632(b)(7)) for deficit-neutral reserve funds and revising discretionary spending limits set pursuant to section 301 of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010.

(c) **DESIGNATIONS.**—If a provision of legislation is designated as an emergency requirement under this section, the committee report and any statement of managers accompanying that legislation shall include an explanation of the manner in which the provision meets the criteria in subsection (f).

(d) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section, the terms “direct spending”, “receipts”, and “appropriations for discretionary accounts” mean any provision of a bill, joint resolution,

amendment, motion, amendment between the Houses, or conference report that affects direct spending, receipts, or appropriations as those terms have been defined and interpreted for purposes of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900 et seq.).

(e) **POINT OF ORDER.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—When the Senate is considering a bill, resolution, amendment, motion, amendment between the Houses, or conference report, if a point of order is made by a Senator against an emergency designation in that measure, that provision making such a designation shall be stricken from the measure and may not be offered as an amendment from the floor.

(2) **SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEALS.**—

(A) **WAIVER.**—Paragraph (1) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(B) **APPEALS.**—Appeals in the Senate from the decisions of the Chair relating to any provision of this subsection shall be limited to 1 hour, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the appellant and the manager of the bill or joint resolution, as the case may be. An affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this subsection.

(3) **DEFINITION OF AN EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.**—For purposes of paragraph (1), a provision shall be considered an emergency designation if it designates any item as an emergency requirement pursuant to this subsection.

(4) **FORM OF THE POINT OF ORDER.**—A point of order under paragraph (1) may be raised by a Senator as provided in section 313(e) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 644(e)).

(5) **CONFERENCE REPORTS.**—When the Senate is considering a conference report on, or an amendment between the Houses in relation to, a bill, upon a point of order being made by any Senator pursuant to this section, and such point of order being sustained, such material contained in such conference report shall be stricken, and the Senate shall proceed to consider the question of whether the Senate shall recede from its amendment and concur with a further amendment, or concur in the House amendment with a further amendment, as the case may be, which further amendment shall consist of only that portion of the conference report or House amendment, as the case may be, not so stricken. Any such motion in the Senate shall be debatable. In any case in which such point of order is sustained against a conference report (or Senate amendment derived from such conference report by operation of this subsection), no further amendment shall be in order.

(f) **CRITERIA.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For purposes of this section, any provision is an emergency requirement if the situation addressed by such provision is—

(A) necessary, essential, or vital (not merely useful or beneficial);

(B) sudden, quickly coming into being, and not building up over time;

(C) an urgent, pressing, and compelling need requiring immediate action;

(D) subject to paragraph (2), unforeseen, unpredictable, and unanticipated; and

(E) not permanent, temporary in nature.

(2) **UNFORESEEN.**—An emergency that is part of an aggregate level of anticipated emergencies, particularly when normally estimated in advance, is not unforeseen.

(g) **INAPPLICABILITY.**—In the Senate, section 4112 of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress),

the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018, shall no longer apply.

SEC. 4003. ENFORCEMENT OF ALLOCATIONS, AGGREGATES, AND OTHER LEVELS.

(a) **POINT OF ORDER.**—During each of fiscal years 2019 through 2028, it shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, motion, amendment, amendment between the Houses, or conference report that would cause the amount of new budget authority, outlays, or deficits to be more than, or would cause the amount of revenues to be less than, the amount set forth under any allocation, aggregate, or other level established under this resolution.

(b) **WAIVER AND APPEAL.**—Subsection (a) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under subsection (a).

SEC. 4004. POINT OF ORDER AGAINST LEGISLATION PROVIDING FUNDING WITHIN MORE THAN 3 SUBALLOCATIONS UNDER SECTION 302(b).

(a) **POINT OF ORDER.**—It shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, motion, amendment, amendment between the Houses, or conference report that appropriates amounts that are within more than 3 of the suballocations under section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(b)).

(b) **WAIVER AND APPEAL.**—Subsection (a) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under subsection (a).

SEC. 4005. DUPLICATION DETERMINATIONS BY THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE.

(a) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term “covered legislation” means a bill or resolution of a public character reported by any committee of the Senate.

(b) **DUPLICATION DETERMINATIONS BY THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE.**—Any estimate provided by the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 653) for covered legislation shall include an analysis that includes—

(1) a determination of whether the covered legislation creates any new Federal program, office, or initiative that would duplicate or overlap with any existing Federal entity with similar mission, purpose, goals, or activities; and

(2) a listing of all such instances of duplication or overlapping created by the covered legislation.

SEC. 4006. BREAKDOWN OF COST ESTIMATES BY BUDGET FUNCTION.

Any cost estimate prepared by the Congressional Budget Office shall specify the percentage of the estimated cost that is within each budget function.

SEC. 4007. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON TREATMENT OF REDUCTION OF APPROPRIATIONS LEVELS TO ACHIEVE SAVINGS.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

(1) H. Con. Res. 448 (96th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1981, gave authorizing committees reconciliation instructions which amounted to approximately two-thirds of the savings required under reconciliation.

(2) The language in H. Con. Res. 448 resulted in a debate about how reconciling discretionary spending programs could be in

order given that authorizations of appropriations for programs did not actually change spending and the programs authorized would be funded through later annual appropriation. The staff of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate and the counsel to the Majority Leader advised that upon consultation with the Parliamentarian, the original instructions on discretionary spending would be out of order because of the phrase, "to modify programs". This was seen as too broad and programs could be modified without resulting in changes to their future appropriations.

(3) To rectify this violation, the Committee on the Budget of the Senate reported S. Con. Res. 9 (97th Congress), revising the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal years 1981, 1982, and 1983, to include reconciliation, which revised the language in the reconciliation instructions to change entitlement law and "to report changes in laws within the jurisdiction of that committee sufficient to reduce appropriations levels so as to achieve savings".

(4) This was understood to mean changes in authorization language of discretionary programs would be permissible under reconciliation procedures provided such changes in law would have the result in affecting a change in later outlays derived from future appropriations. Further it was understood that a change in authorization language that caused a change in later outlays was considered to be a change in outlays for the purpose of reconciliation.

(5) On April 2, 1981, the Senate voted 88 to 10 to approve S. Con. Res. 9 with the modified reconciliation language.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that committees reporting changes in laws within the jurisdiction of that committee sufficient to reduce appropriations levels so as to achieve savings shall be considered to be changes in outlays for the purpose of enforcing the prohibition on extraneous matters in reconciliation bills.

SEC. 4008. PROHIBITION ON PREEMPTIVE WAIVERS.

In the Senate, it shall not be in order to move to waive or suspend a point of order under the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) or any concurrent resolution on the budget with respect to a bill, joint resolution, motion, amendment, amendment between the Houses, or conference report unless the point of order has been specifically raised by a Senator.

SEC. 4009. ADJUSTMENTS FOR LEGISLATION REDUCING APPROPRIATIONS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations in effect under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(a)) and the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for any bill or joint resolution considered pursuant to section 2001 containing the recommendations of one or more committees, or for one or more amendments to, a conference report on, or an amendment between the Houses in relation to such a bill or joint resolution, by the amounts necessary to accommodate the reduction in the amount of discretionary appropriations for a fiscal year caused by the measure.

SEC. 4010. AUTHORITY.

Congress adopts this title under the authority under section 301(b)(4) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 632(b)(4)).

SEC. 4011. EXERCISE OF RULEMAKING POWERS.

Congress adopts the provisions of this title—

(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate, and as such they shall be con-

sidered as part of the rules of the Senate and such rules shall supersede other rules only to the extent that they are inconsistent with such other rules; and

(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of the Senate to change those rules at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as is the case of any other rule of the Senate.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 37—SETTING FORTH THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019 AND SETTING FORTH THE APPROPRIATE BUDGETARY LEVELS FOR FISCAL YEARS 2020 THROUGH 2028

Mr. PAUL submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was placed on the calendar:

S. CON. RES. 37

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019.

(a) DECLARATION.—Congress declares that this resolution is the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2019 and that this resolution sets forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2020 through 2028.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this concurrent resolution is as follows:

Sec. 1. Concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2019.

TITLE I—RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS

Subtitle A—Budgetary Levels in Both Houses

Sec. 1101. Recommended levels and amounts.
Sec. 1102. Major functional categories.

Subtitle B—Levels and Amounts in the Senate

Sec. 1201. Social Security in the Senate.
Sec. 1202. Postal Service discretionary administrative expenses in the Senate.

TITLE II—RECONCILIATION

Sec. 2001. Reconciliation in the Senate.

TITLE III—RESERVE FUNDS

Sec. 3001. Deficit reduction fund for efficiencies, consolidations, and other savings.
Sec. 3002. Reserve fund relating to health savings accounts.

TITLE IV—BUDGET PROCESS

Sec. 4001. Voting threshold for points of order.
Sec. 4002. Emergency legislation.
Sec. 4003. Enforcement of allocations, aggregates, and other levels.
Sec. 4004. Duplication determinations by the Congressional Budget Office.
Sec. 4005. Breakdown of cost estimates by budget function.
Sec. 4006. Sense of the Senate on treatment of reduction of appropriations levels to achieve savings.
Sec. 4007. Prohibition on preemptive waivers.
Sec. 4008. Adjustments for legislation reducing appropriations.
Sec. 4009. Authority.
Sec. 4010. Exercise of rulemaking powers.

TITLE I—RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS

Subtitle A—Budgetary Levels in Both Houses

SEC. 1101. RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS.

The following budgetary levels are appropriate for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2028:

(1) FEDERAL REVENUES.—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution:

(A) The recommended levels of Federal revenues are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$2,590,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: \$2,736,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: \$2,845,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: \$2,990,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: \$3,164,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$3,338,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$3,513,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: \$3,807,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: \$4,058,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: \$4,230,000,000,000.

(B) The amounts by which the aggregate levels of Federal revenues should be changed are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: –\$1,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: –\$1,800,000,000.

(2) NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY.—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution, the appropriate levels of total new budget authority are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$3,474,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: \$3,233,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: \$3,070,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: \$3,086,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: \$3,049,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$3,018,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$3,068,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: \$3,097,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: \$3,127,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: \$3,159,000,000,000.

(3) BUDGET OUTLAYS.—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution, the appropriate levels of total budget outlays are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$3,151,170,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: \$3,119,660,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: \$3,088,460,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: \$3,057,580,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: \$3,027,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$2,996,730,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$3,026,700,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: \$3,056,970,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: \$3,087,540,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: \$3,118,410,000,000.

(4) DEFICITS.—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution, the amounts of the deficits are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: –\$708,170,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: –\$550,660,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: –\$435,460,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: –\$290,580,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: –\$118,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$49,270,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$156,300,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026: \$379,030,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027: \$555,460,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028: \$649,590,000,000.

(5) PUBLIC DEBT.—Pursuant to section 301(a)(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 632(a)(5)), the appropriate levels of the public debt are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$16,559,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: \$17,483,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: \$18,473,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: \$19,554,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: \$20,729,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: \$21,979,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: \$23,369,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026: \$24,943,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027: \$26,454,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028: \$27,929,000,000,000.

(6) DEBT HELD BY THE PUBLIC.—The appropriate levels of debt held by the public are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$22,278,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020: \$23,223,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021: \$24,196,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022: \$25,199,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023: \$26,320,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024: \$27,544,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025: \$28,854,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026: \$30,435,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027: \$31,792,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028: \$32,985,000,000,000.

SEC. 1102. MAJOR FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES.

Congress determines and declares that the appropriate levels of new budget authority and outlays for fiscal years 2019 through 2028 for each major functional category are:

(1) National Defense (050):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$728,697,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$678,276,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$660,632,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$660,658,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$676,312,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$664,529,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$692,752,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$681,476,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$709,588,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$689,183,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$726,971,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$698,885,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$744,692,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$720,771,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$762,838,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$738,346,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$781,485,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$756,358,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$801,504,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$780,743,000,000.

(2) International Affairs (150):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$64,431,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$48,945,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$65,994,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$53,737,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$66,600,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$57,679,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$65,230,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$60,253,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$66,750,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$62,465,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$68,424,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$64,300,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$69,986,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$65,812,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$71,603,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$67,379,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$73,243,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$68,920,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$74,887,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$70,533,000,000.

(3) General Science, Space, and Technology (250):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$32,740,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$32,054,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$33,488,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$32,708,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$34,287,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$33,452,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$35,089,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$34,251,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$35,897,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$35,052,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$36,762,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$35,901,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$37,602,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$36,729,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$38,445,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$37,562,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$39,321,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$38,406,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$40,209,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$39,279,000,000.

(4) Energy (270):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$4,528,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$3,318,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$5,096,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$4,104,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$4,910,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$4,340,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$3,601,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$3,100,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$3,325,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$2,491,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$3,385,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$2,504,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$3,415,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$2,542,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$3,226,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$2,358,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$3,263,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$2,599,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$5,965,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$5,306,000,000.

(5) Natural Resources and Environment (300):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$61,470,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$43,549,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$63,358,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$45,737,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$64,559,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$48,031,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$65,036,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$48,715,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$68,045,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$51,876,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$69,679,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$53,770,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$70,871,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$55,537,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$73,144,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$58,364,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$75,001,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$60,815,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$76,866,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$63,282,000,000.

(6) Agriculture (350):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$23,298,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$22,428,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$22,766,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$21,978,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$24,355,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$23,651,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$25,015,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$24,348,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$24,957,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$34,269,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$25,309,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$34,613,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$25,663,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$34,919,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$26,210,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$25,483,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$26,289,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$25,556,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$26,658,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$25,906,000,000.

(7) Commerce and Housing Credit (370):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$14,872,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$6,858,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$15,418,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$7,225,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$16,254,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$7,329,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$17,211,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$7,115,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$15,639,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$5,298,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$16,139,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$5,485,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$16,941,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$5,303,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$16,387,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$4,988,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$16,874,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$4,580,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$98,513,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$111,165,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$99,592,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$113,347,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$100,694,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$115,454,000,000.
(9) Community and Regional Development (450):
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$94,402,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$45,448,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$96,527,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$52,317,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$98,551,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$58,177,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$100,369,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$65,792,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$102,536,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$71,632,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$104,881,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$77,874,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$107,129,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$83,994,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$109,391,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$89,580,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$111,747,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$94,133,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$114,100,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$98,552,000,000.
(10) Education, Training, Employment, and Social Services (500):
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$113,915,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$112,015,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$119,502,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$122,505,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$123,046,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$120,471,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$124,528,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$122,610,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$124,302,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$123,832,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$126,992,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$125,189,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$129,884,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$127,700,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$132,659,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$130,520,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$135,302,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$133,099,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$138,309,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$136,024,000,000.
(11) Health (550):
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$591,976,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$577,105,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$615,248,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$593,448,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$635,103,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$618,465,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$675,763,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$655,391,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$708,406,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$689,210,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$732,919,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$725,742,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$770,809,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$763,995,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$811,032,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$803,094,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$852,990,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$845,612,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$892,330,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$888,883,000,000.
(12) Medicare (570):
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$648,565,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$648,231,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$693,013,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$692,686,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$646,698,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$746,329,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$837,357,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$836,993,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$861,007,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$860,646,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$878,101,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$877,735,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$983,143,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$982,771,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$1,052,579,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$1,025,196,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$1,127,150,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$1,126,771,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$1,271,586,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$1,271,204,000,000.
(13) Income Security (600):
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$527,870,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$519,077,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$539,364,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$529,959,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$55,766,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$546,954,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$578,382,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$575,912,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$588,808,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$581,459,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$598,211,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$585,933,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$618,261,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$606,904,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$633,569,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$628,222,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$634,354,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$625,722,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$655,156,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$652,253,000,000.
(14) Social Security (650):
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$35,977,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$35,977,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$39,035,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$39,035,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$42,028,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$42,028,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$45,053,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$45,053,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$48,312,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$48,312,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$51,893,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$51,893,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$55,894,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$55,894,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$66,328,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$66,328,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$72,886,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$72,886,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$78,066,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$78,066,000,000.
(15) Veterans Benefits and Services (700):
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$192,838,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$192,108,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$200,133,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$198,629,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$207,549,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$205,736,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$215,660,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$222,648,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$222,313,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$220,784,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$229,290,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$218,166,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$237,747,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$235,727,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$245,652,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$243,565,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$235,852,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$251,684,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$264,156,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$272,947,000,000.
(16) Administration of Justice (750):
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$71,727,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$63,352,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$64,842,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$66,645,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, \$65,374,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$70,625,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, \$67,015,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$71,369,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, \$69,001,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$71,319,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, \$70,862,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$71,297,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, \$72,676,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$72,145,000,000.
Fiscal year 2026:
(A) New budget authority, \$74,281,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$73,728,000,000.
Fiscal year 2027:
(A) New budget authority, \$77,691,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$77,057,000,000.
Fiscal year 2028:
(A) New budget authority, \$84,842,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$84,118,000,000.
(17) General Government (800):
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, \$27,557,000,000.
(B) Outlays, \$24,853,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, \$28,083,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$25,586,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$28,734,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$25,853,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$30,232,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$27,174,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$30,271,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$27,233,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$30,837,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$27,755,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$32,075,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$28,735,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$32,619,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$29,193,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$33,435,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$29,931,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$34,348,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$30,694,000,000.

(18) Net Interest (900):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$470,776,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$470,776,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$564,099,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$564,099,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$648,352,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$648,352,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$719,672,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$719,672,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$764,950,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$764,950,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$799,781,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$799,781,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$831,612,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$831,612,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$907,391,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$907,391,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$789,792,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$789,792,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$834,173,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$834,173,000,000.

(19) Allowances (920):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$27,679,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$18,575,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, —\$48,134,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$19,403,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, —\$50,972,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$35,311,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, —\$54,331,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$47,988,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, —\$56,504,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$53,490,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, —\$59,623,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$58,510,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, —\$61,801,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$61,123,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, —\$63,711,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$63,348,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, —\$66,015,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$65,559,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, —\$62,662,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$65,293,000,000.

(20) New Efficiencies, Consolidations, and Other Savings (930):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, —\$426,137,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$308,812,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, —\$668,153,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$468,659,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, —\$882,483,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$647,654,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, —\$1,209,600,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$905,483,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, —\$1,331,706,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$1,069,229,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, —\$1,470,058,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$1,235,992,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, —\$1,712,029,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$1,443,138,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, —\$1,899,768,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$1,660,922,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, —\$2,064,040,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$1,840,142,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, —\$2,411,721,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$2,169,051,000,000.

(21) Undistributed Offsetting Receipts (950):

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, —\$81,989,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$81,989,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, —\$83,624,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$83,624,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, —\$85,942,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$85,942,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, —\$88,436,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$88,436,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, —\$88,048,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$88,048,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, —\$90,874,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$90,874,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, —\$100,925,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$100,925,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, —\$96,114,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$96,114,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, —\$98,827,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$98,827,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, —\$102,191,000,000.

(B) Outlays, —\$102,191,000,000.

Subtitle B—Levels and Amounts in the Senate

SEC. 1201. SOCIAL SECURITY IN THE SENATE.

(a) SOCIAL SECURITY REVENUES.—For purposes of Senate enforcement under sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633 and 642), the amounts of revenues of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$905,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020: \$941,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021: \$995,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022: \$1,049,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023: \$1,103,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024: \$1,164,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025: \$1,226,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026: \$1,296,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027: \$1,361,000,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028: \$1,442,000,000,000.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY OUTLAYS.—For purposes of Senate enforcement under sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633 and 642), the amounts of outlays of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019: \$897,332,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020: \$955,095,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021: \$1,015,309,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022: \$1,079,773,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023: \$1,147,889,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024: \$1,219,609,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025: \$1,293,326,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026: \$1,370,789,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027: \$1,451,789,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028: \$1,539,941,000,000.

(c) SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—In the Senate, the amounts of new budget authority and budget outlays of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund for administrative expenses are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$5,627,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$5,831,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$5,759,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$5,685,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$5,906,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$5,837,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$6,057,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$5,975,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$6,236,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$6,142,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$6,424,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$6,331,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$6,616,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$6,522,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$6,816,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$6,718,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$7,023,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$6,922,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$7,246,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$7,186,000,000.

SEC. 1202. POSTAL SERVICE DISCRETIONARY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES IN THE SENATE.

In the Senate, the amounts of new budget authority and budget outlays of the Postal Service for discretionary administrative expenses are as follows:

Fiscal year 2019:

(A) New budget authority, \$285,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$285,000,000.

Fiscal year 2020:

(A) New budget authority, \$284,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$284,000,000.

Fiscal year 2021:

(A) New budget authority, \$285,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$285,000,000.

Fiscal year 2022:

(A) New budget authority, \$286,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$286,000,000.

Fiscal year 2023:

(A) New budget authority, \$286,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$286,000,000.

Fiscal year 2024:

(A) New budget authority, \$287,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$287,000,000.

Fiscal year 2025:

(A) New budget authority, \$288,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$288,000,000.

Fiscal year 2026:

(A) New budget authority, \$289,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$289,000,000.

Fiscal year 2027:

(A) New budget authority, \$289,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$289,000,000.

Fiscal year 2028:

(A) New budget authority, \$290,000,000.

(B) Outlays, \$290,000,000.

TITLE II—RECONCILIATION

SEC. 2001. RECONCILIATION IN THE SENATE.

(a) AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY.—The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(b) ARMED SERVICES.—The Committee on Armed Services of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(c) BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS.—The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(d) COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION.—The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(e) ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES.—The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(f) ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS.—The Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(g) FINANCE.—

(1) DEFICIT.—The Committee on Finance of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(2) REVENUE.—The Committee on Finance of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce revenues by not less than \$18,600,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(h) FOREIGN RELATIONS.—The Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(i) HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS.—The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(j) HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.—The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(k) INDIAN AFFAIRS.—The Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(l) INTELLIGENCE.—The Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(m) JUDICIARY.—The Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(n) RULES AND ADMINISTRATION.—The Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(o) VETERANS AFFAIRS.—The Committee on Veterans Affairs of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and by not less than \$5,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

(p) SUBMISSIONS.—In the Senate, not later than June 20, 2018, the committees named in subsections (a) through (o) shall submit their recommendations to the Committee on the Budget of the Senate. Upon receiving such recommendations, the Committee on the Budget of the Senate shall report to the Senate a reconciliation bill carrying out all such recommendations without any substantive revision.

TITLE III—RESERVE FUNDS

SEC. 3001. DEFICIT REDUCTION FUND FOR EFFICIENCIES, CONSOLIDATIONS, AND OTHER SAVINGS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution, and make adjustments to the pay-as-you-go ledger, for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to efficiencies, consolidations, and other savings by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would reduce the deficit over the period of the total of fiscal years 2019 through 2023 and the period of the total of fiscal years 2019 through 2028.

SEC. 3002. RESERVE FUND RELATING TO HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution, and make adjustments to the pay-as-you-go ledger, for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to health savings accounts by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes.

TITLE IV—BUDGET PROCESS

SEC. 4001. VOTING THRESHOLD FOR POINTS OF ORDER.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “covered point of order” means a point of order—

(1) under the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.), the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900 et seq.), or a concurrent resolution on the budget; and

(2) which, but for subsection (b), may be waived only by the affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn.

(b) VOTING THRESHOLD.—In the Senate—

(1) a covered point of order may be waived only by the affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn; and

(2) an affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a covered point of order.

SEC. 4002. EMERGENCY LEGISLATION.

(a) AUTHORITY TO DESIGNATE.—In the Senate, with respect to a provision of direct spending or receipts legislation or appropriations for discretionary accounts that Congress designates as an emergency requirement, by an affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn, in such measure, the amounts of new budget authority, outlays, and receipts in all fiscal years resulting from that provision shall be treated as an emergency requirement for the purpose of this section.

(b) EXEMPTION OF EMERGENCY PROVISIONS.—Any new budget authority, outlays, and receipts resulting from any provision designated as an emergency requirement, pursuant to this section, in any bill, joint resolution, amendment, amendment between the Houses, or conference report shall not count for purposes of sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633 and 642), section 4106 of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018, section 3101 of S. Con. Res. 11 (114th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, and sections 401 and 404 of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010. Designated emergency provisions shall not count for the purpose of revising allocations, aggregates, or other levels pursuant to procedures established under section 301(b)(7) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 632(b)(7)) for deficit-neutral reserve funds and revising discretionary spending limits set pursuant to section 301 of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010.

(c) DESIGNATIONS.—If a provision of legislation is designated as an emergency requirement under this section, the committee report and any statement of managers accompanying that legislation shall include an explanation of the manner in which the provision meets the criteria in subsection (f).

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms “direct spending”, “receipts”, and “appropriations for discretionary accounts” mean any provision of a bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, amendment between the Houses, or conference report that affects direct spending, receipts, or appropriations as those terms have been defined and interpreted for purposes of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900 et seq.).

(e) POINT OF ORDER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—When the Senate is considering a bill, resolution, amendment, motion, amendment between the Houses, or conference report, if a point of order is made by a Senator against an emergency designation in that measure, that provision making

such a designation shall be stricken from the measure and may not be offered as an amendment from the floor.

(2) **SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEALS.**—

(A) **WAIVER.**—Paragraph (1) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(B) **APPEALS.**—Appeals in the Senate from the decisions of the Chair relating to any provision of this subsection shall be limited to 1 hour, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the appellant and the manager of the bill or joint resolution, as the case may be. An affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this subsection.

(3) **DEFINITION OF AN EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.**—For purposes of paragraph (1), a provision shall be considered an emergency designation if it designates any item as an emergency requirement pursuant to this subsection.

(4) **FORM OF THE POINT OF ORDER.**—A point of order under paragraph (1) may be raised by a Senator as provided in section 313(e) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 644(e)).

(5) **CONFERENCE REPORTS.**—When the Senate is considering a conference report on, or an amendment between the Houses in relation to, a bill, upon a point of order being made by any Senator pursuant to this section, and such point of order being sustained, such material contained in such conference report shall be stricken, and the Senate shall proceed to consider the question of whether the Senate shall recede from its amendment and concur with a further amendment, or concur in the House amendment with a further amendment, as the case may be, which further amendment shall consist of only that portion of the conference report or House amendment, as the case may be, not so stricken. Any such motion in the Senate shall be debatable. In any case in which such point of order is sustained against a conference report (or Senate amendment derived from such conference report by operation of this subsection), no further amendment shall be in order.

(f) **CRITERIA.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For purposes of this section, any provision is an emergency requirement if the situation addressed by such provision is—

(A) necessary, essential, or vital (not merely useful or beneficial);

(B) sudden, quickly coming into being, and not building up over time;

(C) an urgent, pressing, and compelling need requiring immediate action;

(D) subject to paragraph (2), unforeseen, unpredictable, and unanticipated; and

(E) not permanent, temporary in nature.

(2) **UNFORESEEN.**—An emergency that is part of an aggregate level of anticipated emergencies, particularly when normally estimated in advance, is not unforeseen.

(g) **INAPPLICABILITY.**—In the Senate, section 4112 of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018, shall no longer apply.

SEC. 4003. ENFORCEMENT OF ALLOCATIONS, AGGREGATES, AND OTHER LEVELS.

(a) **POINT OF ORDER.**—During each of fiscal years 2019 through 2028, it shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, motion, amendment, amendment between the Houses, or conference report that would cause the amount of new budget authority, outlays, or deficits to be more than, or would cause the amount of revenues to be less than, the amount set forth under any allocation, aggregate, or other level established under this resolution.

(b) **WAIVER AND APPEAL.**—Subsection (a) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of five-eighths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under subsection (a).

SEC. 4004. DUPLICATION DETERMINATIONS BY THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE.

(a) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term “covered legislation” means a bill or resolution of a public character reported by any committee of the Senate.

(b) **DUPLICATION DETERMINATIONS BY THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE.**—Any estimate provided by the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 653) for covered legislation shall include an analysis that includes—

(1) a determination of whether the covered legislation creates any new Federal program, office, or initiative that would duplicate or overlap with any existing Federal entity with similar mission, purpose, goals, or activities; and

(2) a listing of all such instances of duplication or overlapping created by the covered legislation.

SEC. 4005. BREAKDOWN OF COST ESTIMATES BY BUDGET FUNCTION.

Any cost estimate prepared by the Congressional Budget Office shall specify the percentage of the estimated cost that is within each budget function.

SEC. 4006. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON TREATMENT OF REDUCTION OF APPROPRIATIONS LEVELS TO ACHIEVE SAVINGS.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

(1) H. Con. Res. 448 (96th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1981, gave authorizing committees reconciliation instructions which amounted to approximately two-thirds of the savings required under reconciliation.

(2) The language in H. Con. Res. 448 resulted in a debate about how reconciling discretionary spending programs could be in order given that authorizations of appropriations for programs did not actually change spending and the programs authorized would be funded through later annual appropriation. The staff of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate and the counsel to the Majority Leader advised that upon consultation with the Parliamentarian, the original instructions on discretionary spending would be out of order because of the phrase, “to modify programs”. This was seen as too broad and programs could be modified without resulting in changes to their future appropriations.

(3) To rectify this violation, the Committee on the Budget of the Senate reported S. Con. Res. 9 (97th Congress), revising the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal years 1981, 1982, and 1983, to include reconciliation, which revised the language in the reconciliation instructions to change entitlement law and “to report changes in laws within the jurisdiction of that committee sufficient to reduce appropriations levels so as to achieve savings”.

(4) This was understood to mean changes in authorization language of discretionary programs would be permissible under reconciliation procedures provided such changes in law would have the result in affecting a change in later outlays derived from future appropriations. Further it was understood that a change in authorization language that caused a change in later outlays was considered to be a change in outlays for the purpose of reconciliation.

(5) On April 2, 1981, the Senate voted 88 to 10 to approve S. Con. Res. 9 with the modified reconciliation language.

(b) **SENSE OF THE SENATE.**—It is the sense of the Senate that committees reporting changes in laws within the jurisdiction of that committee sufficient to reduce appropriations levels so as to achieve savings shall be considered to be changes in outlays for the purpose of enforcing the prohibition on extraneous matters in reconciliation bills.

SEC. 4007. PROHIBITION ON PREEMPTIVE WAIVERS.

In the Senate, it shall not be in order to move to waive or suspend a point of order under the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) or any concurrent resolution on the budget with respect to a bill, joint resolution, motion, amendment, amendment between the Houses, or conference report unless the point of order has been specifically raised by a Senator.

SEC. 4008. ADJUSTMENTS FOR LEGISLATION REDUCING APPROPRIATIONS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations in effect under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(a)) and the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for any bill or joint resolution considered pursuant to section 2001 containing the recommendations of one or more committees, or for one or more amendments to, a conference report on, or an amendment between the Houses in relation to such a bill or joint resolution, by the amounts necessary to accommodate the reduction in the amount of discretionary appropriations for a fiscal year caused by the measure.

SEC. 4009. AUTHORITY.

Congress adopts this title under the authority under section 301(b)(4) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 632(b)(4)).

SEC. 4010. EXERCISE OF RULEMAKING POWERS.

Congress adopts the provisions of this title—

(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate, and as such they shall be considered as part of the rules of the Senate and such rules shall supersede other rules only to the extent that they are inconsistent with such other rules; and

(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of the Senate to change those rules at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as is the case of any other rule of the Senate.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I have 13 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, “Abusive Robocalls and How We Can Stop Them.”

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "The Appropriate Role of States and the Federal Government in Protecting Groundwater."

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at 10:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing "Treaties."

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: David Williams, of Illinois, Robert M. Duncan, of Kentucky, and Calvin R. Tucker, of Pennsylvania, each to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "The 30th Anniversary of Tribal Self-Governance: Successes in Self-Governance and an Outlook for the Next 30 Years".

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "Oversight of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office."

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, during votes and off the Senate floor to conduct a hearing on the following nominations. Paul R. Lawrence, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Benefits, and Joseph L. Falvey, Jr., of Michigan, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Special Committee on Aging is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, "Exploitation of Older Americans by Guardians and Others they Trust."

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON SOLVENCY OF MULTIEmployer PENSION PLANS

The Joint Select Committee on Solvency of Multiemployer Pension Plans is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at 2 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, "The History of Structure of the Multiemployer Pension System."

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

The Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of

the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at 3:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

The Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION, PRODUCT SAFETY, INSURANCE, AND DATA SECURITY

The Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, "Olympic Abuse: The Role of National Governing Bodies in Protection our Athletes."

SUBCOMMITTEE ON BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION

The Subcommittee on Border Security and Immigration of the Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "Strengthening and Reforming America's Immigration Court System."

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my intern, Fiona Steiwer, be given privileges of the floor for the remainder of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that floor privileges be granted to Mary Schultz and William Goldsmith, both fellows in my staff, for the remainder of this session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 361, S. Res. 426.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 426) supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to the preamble, as follows:

(Strike the preamble and insert the part printed in italic.)

Whereas, as of March 2018, there are more than 3,672,000,000 women in the world;

Whereas women and girls around the world—

(1) have fundamental rights;

(2) participate in the political, social, and economic lives of their communities;

(3) play a critical role in providing and caring for their families;

(4) contribute substantially to economic growth and the prevention and resolution of conflict; and

(5) as farmers and caregivers, play an important role in the advancement of food security for their communities;

Whereas the advancement of women around the world is a foreign policy priority for the United States;

Whereas 2018 marks—

(1) the 73rd anniversary of the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations, which was the first international agreement to affirm the principle of equality between women and men;

(2) the 23rd anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, at which 189 countries committed to integrating gender equality into each dimension of society; and

(3) the 7th anniversary of the establishment of the first United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, which includes a comprehensive set of commitments by the United States to advance the meaningful participation of women in decisionmaking relating to matters of war or peace;

Whereas the National Security Strategy of the United States, revised in December 2017—

(1) declares that "societies that empower women to participate fully in civic and economic life are more prosperous and peaceful";

(2) supports "efforts to advance the equality of women, protect the rights of women and girls, and promote women and youth empowerment programs"; and

(3) recognizes that "governments of countries that fail to treat women equally do not allow the societies of those countries to reach full potential";

Whereas the United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, revised in June 2016, states that "[d]eadly conflicts can be more effectively avoided, and peace can be best forged and sustained, when women become equal partners in all aspects of peacebuilding and conflict prevention, when their lives are protected, their voices heard, and their perspectives taken into account.";

Whereas there are 72 national action plans around the world, and there are several additional national action plans known to be in development;

Whereas the joint strategy of the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development entitled "Department of State & USAID Joint Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism" and dated May 2016—

(1) notes that women can play a critical role in identifying and addressing drivers of violent extremism in their families, communities, and broader society; and

(2) commits to supporting programs that engage women "as key stakeholders in preventing and countering violent extremism in their communities";

Whereas, despite the historical underrepresentation of women in conflict resolution processes, women in conflict-affected regions have nevertheless achieved significant success in—

(1) moderating violent extremism;

(2) countering terrorism;

(3) resolving disputes through nonviolent mediation and negotiation; and

(4) stabilizing societies by improving access to peace and security—

(A) services;

(B) institutions; and

(C) venues for decisionmaking;

Whereas, according to the United Nations, peace negotiations are more likely to end in a peace agreement when women and women's groups play an influential role in the negotiation process;

Whereas, according to a study by the International Peace Institute, a peace agreement is 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years if women participate in the development of the peace agreement;

Whereas, according to the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the Department of State, the full and

meaningful participation of women in security forces vastly enhances the effectiveness of the security forces;

Whereas approximately 15,000,000 girls are married every year before they reach the age of 18, which means that—

- (1) 41,000 girls are married every day; or
- (2) 1 girl is married every 2 seconds;

Whereas, according to the International Labor Organization, an estimated 40,300,000 people were victims of modern slavery in 2016, and 71 percent of those victims were women and girls;

Whereas, according to UNICEF—

(1) approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are victims of physical violence; and

(2) it is estimated that 1 in 3 women around the world has experienced some form of physical or sexual violence;

Whereas, according to the 2016 report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime entitled “Global Report on Trafficking in Persons”—

(1) 79 percent of all detected trafficking victims are women and children; and

(2) while trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labor are the most prominently detected forms of trafficking, the trafficking of women and girls for the purpose of forced marriage is emerging as a more prevalent form of trafficking;

Whereas 603,000,000 women live in countries in which domestic violence is not criminalized;

Whereas, on August 10, 2012, the United States Government launched a strategy entitled “United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally”, which is the first interagency strategy that—

(1) addresses gender-based violence around the world;

(2) advances the rights and status of women and girls;

(3) promotes gender equality in United States foreign policy; and

(4) works to bring about a world in which all individuals can pursue their aspirations without the threat of violence;

Whereas, on October 6, 2017, the Women, Peace, and Security Act was enacted into law, which includes requirements for a government-wide “Women, Peace, and Security Strategy” to promote and strengthen women’s participation in peace negotiations and conflict prevention overseas, enhanced training for relevant United States Government personnel, and follow-up evaluations of the effectiveness of the strategy;

Whereas, on October 27, 2017, Ambassador Michele J. Sison, United States Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, stated in a United Nations Security Council debate on women, peace, and security that—

(1) “the role of women in maintaining international peace and security is more critical than ever”;

(2) “collective work is still required for women to gain more positions of leadership in government and civil society, and more seats at the negotiating table”;

(3) “a growing body of evidence confirm[s] that the inclusion of women in peace processes helps reduce conflict and advance stability long-term”;

(4) “when women are involved in efforts to bring about peace and security, the results are more sustainable”;

Whereas, in June 2016, the Department of State released an update to the strategy entitled “United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally”, based on internal evaluations, lessons learned, and consultations with civil society, that underscores that “preventing and responding to gender-based violence is a cornerstone of the U.S. government’s commitment to advancing human rights and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls”;

Whereas the ability of women and girls to realize their full potential is critical to the ability of a country to achieve—

- (1) strong and lasting economic growth; and
- (2) political and social stability;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization—

(1) $\frac{1}{5}$ of the 778,000,000 illiterate individuals in the world are female; and

(2) 130,000,000 girls worldwide are not in school;

Whereas, according to the United States Agency for International Development, as compared to uneducated women, educated women are—

- (1) less likely to marry as children; and
- (2) more likely to have healthier families;

Whereas, although the United Nations Millennium Project reached the goal of achieving gender parity in primary education in most countries in 2015, more work remains to be done to achieve gender equality in primary education worldwide by addressing—

- (1) discriminatory practices;
- (2) cultural norms;
- (3) inadequate sanitation facilities; and
- (4) other factors that favor boys;

Whereas, according to the United Nations, women have access to fewer income earning opportunities and are more likely to manage the household or engage in agricultural work than men, making women more vulnerable to economic insecurity caused by—

- (1) natural disasters; and
- (2) long term changes in weather patterns;

Whereas women around the world—

(1) face a variety of constraints that severely limit their economic participation and productivity; and

(2) are underrepresented in the labor force;

Whereas closing the global gender gap in labor markets could increase worldwide gross domestic product by as much as \$28,000,000,000 by 2025;

Whereas despite the achievements of individual female leaders—

(1) women around the world remain vastly underrepresented in—

- (A) high-level positions; and
- (B) national and local legislatures and governments; and

(2) according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women account for only 22 percent of national parliamentarians and 17.7 percent of government ministers;

Whereas, according to the World Health Organization, during the period beginning in 1990 and ending in 2015, global maternal mortality decreased by approximately 44 percent, but approximately 830 women die from preventable causes relating to pregnancy or childbirth each day, and 99 percent of all maternal deaths occur in developing countries;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization—

(1) suicide is the leading cause of death for girls between the ages of 15 and 19; and

(2) complications from pregnancy or childbirth is the second-leading cause of death for those girls;

Whereas the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reports that women and girls comprise approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ of the 65,300,000 refugees and internally displaced or stateless individuals in the world;

Whereas it is imperative—

(1) to alleviate violence and discrimination against women; and

(2) to afford women every opportunity to be full and productive members of their communities;

Whereas violence, discrimination, and harmful practices against women and girls are a direct result of negative social norms that undervalue females in society; and

Whereas March 8, 2018, is recognized as International Women’s Day, a global day—

(1) to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women in the past, present, and future; and

(2) to recognize the obstacles that women face in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of International Women’s Day;

(2) recognizes that the empowerment of women is inextricably linked to the potential of a country to generate—

- (A) economic growth;
- (B) sustainable democracy; and
- (C) inclusive security;

(3) recognizes and honors individuals in the United States and around the world, including women human rights defenders and civil society leaders, that have worked throughout history to ensure that women are guaranteed equality and basic human rights;

(4) recognizes the unique cultural, historical, and religious differences throughout the world and urges the United States Government to act with respect and understanding toward legitimate differences when promoting any policies;

(5) reaffirms the commitment—

(A) to end discrimination and violence against women and girls;

(B) to ensure the safety and welfare of women and girls;

(C) to pursue policies that guarantee the basic human rights of women and girls worldwide; and

(D) to promote meaningful and significant participation of women in every aspect of society and community;

(6) supports sustainable, measurable, and global development that seeks to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women; and

(7) encourages the people of the United States to observe International Women’s Day with appropriate programs and activities.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the resolution?

Hearing none, the question is on agreeing to the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 426) was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to and the preamble, as amended, be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 426

Whereas as of March 2018, there are more than 3,672,000,000 women in the world;

Whereas women and girls around the world—

- (1) have fundamental rights;
- (2) participate in the political, social, and economic lives of their communities;

(3) play a critical role in providing and caring for their families;

(4) contribute substantially to economic growth and the prevention and resolution of conflict; and

(5) as farmers and caregivers, play an important role in the advancement of food security for their communities;

Whereas the advancement of women around the world is a foreign policy priority for the United States;

Whereas 2018 marks—

(1) the 73rd anniversary of the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations, which was the first international agreement to affirm the principle of equality between women and men;

(2) the 23rd anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, at which 189 countries committed to integrating gender equality into each dimension of society; and

(3) the 7th anniversary of the establishment of the first United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, which includes a comprehensive set of commitments by the United States to advance the meaningful participation of women in decisionmaking relating to matters of war or peace;

Whereas the National Security Strategy of the United States, revised in December 2017—

(1) declares that “societies that empower women to participate fully in civic and economic life are more prosperous and peaceful”;

(2) supports “efforts to advance the equality of women, protect the rights of women and girls, and promote women and youth empowerment programs”; and

(3) recognizes that “governments of countries that fail to treat women equally do not allow the societies of those countries to reach full potential”;

Whereas the United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, revised in June 2016, states that “[d]eadly conflicts can be more effectively avoided, and peace can be best forged and sustained, when women become equal partners in all aspects of peacebuilding and conflict prevention, when their lives are protected, their voices heard, and their perspectives taken into account.”;

Whereas there are 72 national action plans around the world, and there are several additional national action plans known to be in development;

Whereas the joint strategy of the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development entitled “Department of State & USAID Joint Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism” and dated May 2016—

(1) notes that women can play a critical role in identifying and addressing drivers of violent extremism in their families, communities, and broader society; and

(2) commits to supporting programs that engage women “as key stakeholders in preventing and countering violent extremism in their communities”;

Whereas despite the historical underrepresentation of women in conflict resolution processes, women in conflict-affected regions have nevertheless achieved significant success in—

(1) moderating violent extremism;

(2) countering terrorism;

(3) resolving disputes through nonviolent mediation and negotiation; and

(4) stabilizing societies by improving access to peace and security—

- (A) services;
- (B) institutions; and
- (C) venues for decisionmaking;

Whereas according to the United Nations, peace negotiations are more likely to end in a peace agreement when women and women's groups play an influential role in the negotiation process;

Whereas according to a study by the International Peace Institute, a peace agreement is 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years if women participate in the development of the peace agreement;

Whereas according to the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the Department of State, the full and meaningful participation of women in security forces vastly enhances the effectiveness of the security forces;

Whereas approximately 15,000,000 girls are married every year before they reach the age of 18, which means that—

- (1) 41,000 girls are married every day; or
- (2) 1 girl is married every 2 seconds;

Whereas according to the International Labor Organization, an estimated 40,300,000 people were victims of modern slavery in 2016, and 71 percent of those victims were women and girls;

Whereas according to UNICEF—

(1) approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are victims of physical violence; and

(2) it is estimated that 1 in 3 women around the world has experienced some form of physical or sexual violence;

Whereas according to the 2016 report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime entitled “Global Report on Trafficking in Persons”—

(1) 79 percent of all detected trafficking victims are women and children; and

(2) while trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labor are the most prominently detected forms of trafficking, the trafficking of women and girls for the purpose of forced marriage is emerging as a more prevalent form of trafficking;

Whereas 603,000,000 women live in countries in which domestic violence is not criminalized;

Whereas, on August 10, 2012, the United States Government launched a strategy entitled “United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally”, which is the first interagency strategy that—

(1) addresses gender-based violence around the world;

(2) advances the rights and status of women and girls;

(3) promotes gender equality in United States foreign policy; and

(4) works to bring about a world in which all individuals can pursue their aspirations without the threat of violence;

Whereas, on October 6, 2017, the Women, Peace, and Security Act was enacted into law, which includes requirements for a government-wide “Women, Peace, and Security Strategy” to promote and strengthen women's participation in peace negotiations and conflict prevention overseas, enhanced training for relevant United States Government personnel, and follow-up evaluations of the effectiveness of the strategy;

Whereas, on October 27, 2017, Ambassador Michele J. Sison, United States Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, stated in a United Nations Security Council debate on women, peace, and security that—

(1) “the role of women in maintaining international peace and security is more critical than ever”;

(2) “collective work is still required for women to gain more positions of leadership in government and civil society, and more seats at the negotiating table”;

(3) “a growing body of evidence confirm[s] that the inclusion of women in peace processes helps reduce conflict and advance stability long-term”; and

(4) “when women are involved in efforts to bring about peace and security, the results are more sustainable”;

Whereas in June 2016, the Department of State released an update to the strategy entitled “United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Glob-

ally”, based on internal evaluations, lessons learned, and consultations with civil society, that underscores that “preventing and responding to gender-based violence is a cornerstone of the U.S. government's commitment to advancing human rights and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls”;

Whereas the ability of women and girls to realize their full potential is critical to the ability of a country to achieve—

(1) strong and lasting economic growth; and

(2) political and social stability;

Whereas according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization—

(1) $\frac{3}{4}$ of the 778,000,000 illiterate individuals in the world are female; and

(2) 130,000,000 girls worldwide are not in school;

Whereas according to the United States Agency for International Development, as compared to uneducated women, educated women are—

- (1) less likely to marry as children; and
- (2) more likely to have healthier families;

Whereas although the United Nations Millennium Project reached the goal of achieving gender parity in primary education in most countries in 2015, more work remains to be done to achieve gender equality in primary education worldwide by addressing—

- (1) discriminatory practices;
- (2) cultural norms;
- (3) inadequate sanitation facilities; and
- (4) other factors that favor boys;

Whereas according to the United Nations, women have access to fewer income earning opportunities and are more likely to manage the household or engage in agricultural work than men, making women more vulnerable to economic insecurity caused by—

- (1) natural disasters; and
- (2) long term changes in weather patterns;

Whereas women around the world—

(1) face a variety of constraints that severely limit their economic participation and productivity; and

(2) are underrepresented in the labor force;

Whereas closing the global gender gap in labor markets could increase worldwide gross domestic product by as much as \$28,000,000,000,000 by 2025;

Whereas despite the achievements of individual female leaders—

(1) women around the world remain vastly underrepresented in—

- (A) high-level positions; and
- (B) national and local legislatures and governments; and

(2) according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women account for only 22 percent of national parliamentarians and 17.7 percent of government ministers;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization, during the period beginning in 1990 and ending in 2015, global maternal mortality decreased by approximately 44 percent, but approximately 830 women die from preventable causes relating to pregnancy or childbirth each day, and 99 percent of all maternal deaths occur in developing countries;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization—

(1) suicide is the leading cause of death for girls between the ages of 15 and 19; and

(2) complications from pregnancy or childbirth is the second-leading cause of death for those girls;

Whereas the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reports that women and girls comprise approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ of the 65,300,000 refugees and internally displaced or stateless individuals in the world;

Whereas it is imperative—

(1) to alleviate violence and discrimination against women; and

(2) to afford women every opportunity to be full and productive members of their communities;

Whereas violence, discrimination, and harmful practices against women and girls are a direct result of negative social norms that undervalue females in society; and

Whereas March 8, 2018, is recognized as International Women's Day, a global day—

(1) to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women in the past, present, and future; and

(2) to recognize the obstacles that women face in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of International Women's Day;

(2) recognizes that the empowerment of women is inextricably linked to the potential of a country to generate—

(A) economic growth;

(B) sustainable democracy; and

(C) inclusive security;

(3) recognizes and honors individuals in the United States and around the world, including women human rights defenders and civil society leaders, that have worked throughout history to ensure that women are guaranteed equality and basic human rights;

(4) recognizes the unique cultural, historical, and religious differences throughout the world and urges the United States Government to act with respect and understanding toward legitimate differences when promoting any policies;

(5) reaffirms the commitment—

(A) to end discrimination and violence against women and girls;

(B) to ensure the safety and welfare of women and girls;

(C) to pursue policies that guarantee the basic human rights of women and girls worldwide; and

(D) to promote meaningful and significant participation of women in every aspect of society and community;

(6) supports sustainable, measurable, and global development that seeks to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women; and

(7) encourages the people of the United States to observe International Women's Day with appropriate programs and activities.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AUTHORIZING A SENATOR TO BRING A YOUNG SON OR DAUGHTER OF THE SENATOR ONTO THE FLOOR OF THE SENATE DURING VOTES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 463 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 463) authorizing a Senator to bring a young son or daughter of the Senator onto the floor of the Senate during votes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 463) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in the RECORD of April 12, 2018, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 474, S. Res. 475, and S. Res. 476.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2018

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, April 19; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Bridenstine nomination. I further ask that all postcloture time on the Bridenstine nomination expire at 1:45 p.m. tomorrow and the Senate vote on confirmation of the Bridenstine nomination with no intervening action or debate; finally, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous con-

sent that it stand adjourned under the provisions of S. Res. 474, and do so as a further mark of respect for the late John Melcher, former Senator from Montana, following the remarks of Senators DURBIN, INHOFE, and PORTMAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Illinois.

ALLOWING SENATORS' YOUNG CHILDREN ON THE SENATE FLOOR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on Monday April 9, 2018, at 7:07 a.m., a tiny little message to the Senate arrived: Maile Pearl Bowlsbey became the very first baby born to a Senator, bringing joy to her father Bryan and to her amazing mother, my colleague, Illinois Senator TAMMY DUCKWORTH.

With this blessed arrival, this Chamber faced the reality of Senate parenthood. And tonight, just moments ago, we made the decision to allow Maile to help us make Senate history. Tonight we changed the standing rules of the Senate so that Senator DUCKWORTH, and any other Senator who has an infant, can bring their child to the floor of the Senate during a vote.

Senator DUCKWORTH can keep her responsibility under our Constitution and vote as a Senator without giving up her responsibility as a mom at that moment.

I think it will do us good in the Senate every once in a while to see a pacifier next to the antique ink wells on our desks or a diaper bag next to one of these brass spittoons which sits on the floor—thank goodness, never used. Perhaps, the occasional cry of a baby will shock the Senate at times into speaking up and even crying out on the issues that confront our Nation and the world.

We certainly revere history in the Senate, but part of our history is recognizing change—the change that brought the first woman to the Senate, the change that brought disabled people to the floor of the Senate, and changes that will come to it in the future. These adaptations have made us a better Senate and more reflective of the people we serve.

I just can't say enough about my colleague Senator TAMMY DUCKWORTH, an amazing woman who served her country, activated in the Illinois National Guard as a helicopter pilot in Iraq. When a grenade was shot into the cockpit and blew up and caused her grievous injuries, many people wondered if she would survive. She not only survived, but she prospered. She is determined and brave. She now is the mother of two little girls—something just short of a miracle—and that motherhood is something that is a source of great joy to all of us who count TAMMY as a friend and a colleague and a great leader in the Senate.

Let me also give special recognition to two of my colleagues who made this resolution possible. Senator AMY KLOBUCHAR worked closely with TAMMY

DUCKWORTH on this issue and is our ranking Democrat on the Senate Rules Committee. AMY put in a lot of hours and good humor, and I thank her from the bottom of my heart for helping our colleague. And special thanks to Senator ROY BLUNT, the Republican chairman of the Senate Rules Committee. ROY BLUNT told me from the start: I support this resolution. It will come right out of the Rules Committee to the floor so we can move on it quickly. When TAMMY DUCKWORTH returns from maternity leave, we will be able to accommodate her little girl and, if it becomes necessary, to bring her to the floor during the course of a vote.

Let me close by saying that today we officially say to Maile Pearl Bowsbey: Welcome to the world and welcome to the U.S. Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, let me, first of all, join my friend from Illinois in this tribute he is making to TAMMY and the baby. I do have to correct him on one thing, however. He talked about diaper bags. They don't use diaper bags anymore. They are disposable diapers. I know because I have 20 kids and grandkids. But I agree with the Senator's remarks wholeheartedly.

ETHIOPIA

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I know there is a lot of competition for the time right now, and I feel badly that I finally got to the point where, in order to get the message out—it is a message many people think is not significant, but I assure you that this is of grave importance not just to a country but to the entire continent of Africa.

The House of Representatives, just last week, passed H. Res. 128 to chastise one of our closest allies on the African continent, Ethiopia. Although the legislation claims to support Ethiopia, the reality is that the resolution is outdated. It was written years ago and was blindly passed without consideration for the current situation in Ethiopia. It was also passed under a voice vote so that no one member of Congress would have to carry the stigma of being on the record voting for it.

I know the House passed it because most of them have never been to Ethiopia and don't really know the miracle we have seen in that country. I know the transformation Ethiopia has made in economic and social development alongside their ongoing commitment to establishing security in the Horn of Africa.

Since 2005, I have visited Ethiopia 18 different times, engaging and developing relationships with Prime Ministers, with Cabinet Ministers, legislators, businessmen, aid workers, and everyone else in between. There isn't another Member of Congress who has traveled in Ethiopia, engaged with the Ethiopian Government and the Ethiopian people more than I have.

I say this for a reason. It is to show that I know something about Ethiopia. I know we have been here before. What happened last week has happened before. People don't even know it. So they passed a negative resolution on Ethiopia by voice vote. The resolution fails to understand the history of Ethiopia. I want to talk about that.

Ethiopia is the oldest independent country in all of Africa, but one that is newly democratic. It is all new to them.

There is also a Christian history to the nation, which nobody else has on the continent of Africa. Ethiopia is featured in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

In the New Testament, we hear about Philip. This is in Acts 8. Philip meets the Ethiopian eunuch on the road to Damascus. We find out later that the eunuch was actually the treasurer of the country of Ethiopia at that time. Philip told the eunuch about Jesus. He talked about the Old Testament and the Queen of Sheba and Solomon. There are over 50 of these mentions in the Bible. They had long conversations about Jesus.

Philip was making these comments. Before the conversation was over, he baptized the eunuch. The eunuch went off to Ethiopia and took the first word of Jesus to Ethiopia. That is very significant.

Coincidentally, while Addis Ababa is the capital of Ethiopia, there was a time when Aksum was the capital. That was many years ago. During the time of the Queen of Sheba, that was the capital of Ethiopia.

Coincidentally, I happened to be in Ethiopia when a farmer in a field ran into some old relics, and they started excavating. They found out that was the palace of the Queen of Sheba. There had been discussion as to whether or not the Queen of Sheba was from Yemen or Ethiopia, but that was concrete proof they had discovered that it was the case. The story goes on and on.

We all know about the Queen of Sheba and Solomon. Solomon had all the wealth in the world, and she wanted to meet Solomon. She went down to the Red Sea to see Solomon. Well, she got to Israel and she met Solomon. They were engaged very closely together. I think we all know that they ended up having a son who went back to his country.

By the way, the part of the Old Testament I am quoting right now is in 1 Kings 10:1. That is about the trip between Israel and Ethiopia. Sheba and Solomon had a boy. The boy was Menelik. He was a very smart person. As he was growing up in years, before returning to their home country in Ethiopia, he actually took the Ark of the Covenant back to Ethiopia, where it is today in Aksum.

A lot of people don't know that. If anyone questions what I am saying right now, there is a book written that was called "The Sign and the Seal," by Graham Hancock. It is very well-docu-

mented. When you read that, you come to the conclusion that this is where the Ark of the Covenant is. I have been to the Ark of the Covenant with many Members of the Senate here—certainly, Senator BOOZMAN from Arkansas, Senator MIKE ENZI from Wyoming, Senator MIKE ROUNDS from South Dakota, and many others. We have been up there and we have actually seen where this has taken place.

I say this because there is that very rich history. It is all documented in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The current controversy, and why we are here today, started back in the 1970s with a man named Mengistu. From 1974 to 1991, Mengistu was the leader of the communist Derg. This was the controlling party at that time. It is a communist party. They ran Ethiopia. It was a terrible time for Ethiopia. That was during one of the worst famines they had, which killed over a million people—perhaps the most significant famine in history in terms of deaths.

Many Ethiopians fled during that time and relocated in the United States. That is understandable. The communists were booted out. A lot of the people, during the time they were still in, came to the United States.

It is interesting because the Ethiopians are very outstanding people. They are the kind that get things done when other people don't. That makes them different from all the other countries in Africa.

So a lot of these Ethiopians came to America, and they have made great, really remarkable contributions to America, building organizations and getting involved. Rightfully so, they were outspoken against the brutal regime, but they haven't changed their outspokenness to reflect the changing conditions in Ethiopia.

At the time that this took place, one person who was responsible, to a large extent, for getting rid of the communists and the communist threat in Ethiopia was a guy named Meles. He ran, he came from the bush, and he won. He ended up as Prime Minister. This is really the election that a lot of people don't like, and they forget about the fact that he was the Prime Minister who actually got rid of the communists in Ethiopia.

So he became a Prime Minister. He started to build democracy. He died in 2012. I got to know him quite well during that timeframe, and I saw the progress that he made and the advances they made.

He was then replaced by another Prime Minister, whose name is Hailemariam. Now, he became Prime Minister, and he continued to push for democracy. Hailemariam worked diligently to improve things.

Under his tenure, Ethiopia established the independent Ethiopian Human Rights Committee to report on violence and human rights problems and abuses. They didn't just establish

it; they acted on it. They came out with a report and acted on it to hold perpetrators accountable and to make the improvements that were being made. Our relationship wasn't just government to government; it was brother to brother.

In February of 2017, Prime Minister Hailemariam suggested that, since the provinces were all fighting at that time—there were nine provinces in Ethiopia. Each province has a Governor. We suggested on the phone, with the Members of the Senate here and the House at a Prayer Breakfast, that what we ought to do is that we ought to follow the recommendation of Eisenhower. He said—in fact, this is right after World War II: The problems of this world are so great that we will never resolve the problems until we learn to sit down and pray together. So we decided: Let's get all the Governors, the Prime Minister, the Members of the House, the Senate, and the rest together, and we will pray for them.

We did this. In fact, I had five Senators with me at that time, and we went over. The problem was only two Governors showed up. So 8 months later, we came back and put together the same thing and talked to them to let them know what this is all about. And it happened 8 months later. We were just talking about it just recently.

We had nine Governors who had been fighting. Hailemariam and we all prayed together.

Now, at the same time, there was a Congressman, RANDY HULTGREN, over at the House, who happened to be president of the House Prayer Breakfast. The time change worked perfectly. At the time we were praying there, if you took the 7-hour differential, they were meeting at the House Prayer Breakfast here in Washington. So he joined in. Now, I am not smart enough to figure out how they do this. It is some kind of thing called Skype, where you can get on TV and communicate. So they were praying over there with all of these House Members at the same time that we were praying. On top of that, we had a bunch of great pages, like the pages sitting right in front of me today, all praying at the same time. This was going on all over America.

So they all got together, and it worked—the same group of people who had just hated each other, who had never been in the same room before. The Prime Minister and all of us—Members of the Senate and others who were there—were all rejoicing and embracing each other.

That's really significant. The 9 governors had never been together before. The majority of Americans can't easily grasp this, but is different in Ethiopia. Most of the people don't live in cities, and that made this effort that much more difficult. That is the reverse of the rest of the world. The vast majority of people who live there are in rural communities, and that made this widespread change and development a longer and more difficult path.

In Ethiopia, the tribal factions also play a greater role. Anyone who has been there understands this. If you go from Province to Province, that used to be from tribe to tribe, and they historically have not gotten along until this time. So it made it more difficult because of the factions and all of that, but it worked. We unified them together, and that was unlike anything that has ever happened.

Earlier this month, Ethiopia took another step to showing their commitment to a free and fair democracy by selecting a new Prime Minister. And who is this? His name is Abiy Ahmed, a doctor.

In fact, it is kind of interesting, if you think about his credentials. Just listen to this. Abiy received his first degree, a bachelor's degree, in computer engineering from the Microlink Information Technology College in Addis. That was in 2001.

In 2005, Abiy earned a postgraduate certificate in cryptography in South Africa. He holds a master of arts in transformational leadership and change with merit, earned at the Business School in Greenwich University in London, in collaboration with the International Leadership Institute in Addis, in 2011. He holds a master of business administration from the Leadstar College of Management and Leadership in Addis, in partnership with Ashland University in Ohio.

In 2017, Abiy was awarded a Ph.D. from the Institute for Peace and Security Studies at Addis Ababa University.

Now, we haven't studied it all the way through, but what we did is we took a cursory look at that, and we believe he is the most highly educated Prime Minister in the history of the continent.

Here we are with this Dr. Abiy, who has been specially selected for his commitment to democracy, good governance, and the rule of law. I met Abiy for the first time in February of 2016 at a leader's breakfast, where he told the story of his journey of faith in Jesus. He is very, very articulate, someone who no one would forget about.

We met a year later, when we prayed and talked about how to unify the country in peace, not conflict. It is from these meetings that I know that Abiy is committed to democracy and the future of Ethiopia. He is showing that with his actions as well.

Last week, he specifically sought to engage the opposition party and its leaders. He said:

We want to work hand in hand with you. What we say and do must match.

Since his inauguration, he has also restored the internet service all across the country, and he has released 11 high-profile dissidents. This is what we need to be encouraging, not delegitimizing his authority with a heavy handed resolution. After his first week in office, the first week in office, they passed this resolution—this hateful resolution over at the House.

He is also the youngest head of state in all of Africa. Abiy is just 41 years old. He shows an optimistic and engaged future for Ethiopia—a country where 70 percent of the population is less than 35 years old. He deserves a chance to enact the democratic reforms he called for during his inaugural address, before being slapped with a condemnation of his government by a House of Representatives resolution.

They have quite an opportunity. Ethiopia is one of the fastest growing economies in the region, and it has made great strides in lowering the poverty rate. But the resolution that passed last week wasn't about this. They didn't talk about everything that I just articulated.

Ethiopia is also an important partner for us in promoting regional peace and security. We have all recently seen how Islamic terrorists are pushing from the Middle East and regrouping and establishing themselves across Africa. This is the thing that he has inherited. That is what he is in right now.

Ethiopia has been an important partner for the United States in combating the spread of terrorism from Somalia and al-Qaida. He is our closest partner in this effort.

As terrorism grows through Djibouti and the Horn of Africa into northeastern Africa, this is a threat to global security. Ethiopia has been a critical partner for the United States in combating that spread of terrorism.

Ethiopia is the top African contributor to U.N. peacekeeping troops and supplies about 8 percent of the global peacekeeping force. It is not the second or among the first. He was No. 1—the first one to be a contributor to the U.N. peacekeeping effort. Those are contributions they have made. Other countries have not done that, but they have.

More than that, Ethiopia's professional and capable military has also been a positive force in regional stability. When we had problems in parts of Africa—and Somalia comes to mind right now—when we call upon them to send troops, they are the first ones who respond, and they are the ones who send the most of their capable troops.

Ethiopia was a regional stabilizer during the crisis with Sudan and South Sudan. I think we all remember when Sudan was one unified country, and they had not always gotten along with South Sudan. South Sudan had been trying to get their independence for years and years, and, finally, they were successful, and right after that, it looked like it wasn't going to work.

But the resolution last week didn't consider any of the progress Ethiopia has made and the leadership they have provided.

Beyond just the government, more good things are happening in Ethiopia than I have ever seen. The people are not just like other people. There is not time, but I could give so many examples. I will single out just one family

who is really typical of what is going on in Ethiopia.

We have longtime friends there—Marta Gabre-Tsadick and her husband Demeke Tekle-Wold. I will refer to them as Marta and Demeke. They founded an organization called Project Mercy. This is kind of interesting. This wasn't government. This is what they have done and are trying to do in their country.

It is kind of interesting because Marta, as a very young girl, went to work for Haile Selassie. We all know Haile Selassie and what a hero he was before the communists came in in 1974 and murdered him and took over the country. Marta actually had worked for him at one time.

They received political asylum in the United States in the early 1970s, after the communist takeover in Ethiopia, only to return to the country to care for, as they say, the "least of these." That is what they have been doing.

Marta wrote a book that should be required reading so people would know the sacrifices that people make to escape communism. The name of her book is "Sheltered by the King."

In fact, if any of you want a copy of it, I will give it to you.

It tells the story about the communist takeover when Haile Selassie was murdered. It was about their escape from the communists.

Throughout the years, I have partnered with Marta and Demeke on several occasions. In 2008, I worked with the USAID. At that time, we had a guy, who, unfortunately, wasn't able stay there very long. He was head of the USAID. At that time, they prioritized the shipment of 43 containers of Atmit. This is during the time of starvation. Atmit is a nutritional supplement that was sent to young children, to those in the most severe stages of starvation.

Ethiopia was hit especially hard in the global economic crisis, and these containers equaled 600 tons of food to feed 27,000 severely malnourished children.

The story of Marta and Demeke is kind of interesting because they started out in Addis, the capital. They started out in a small house, getting three or four young men—boys—uneducated and taught them the Scriptures, taught them how to read and write, taught them all of these things, and then how to put together an economy and get these people so that they can go out on their own. They were successful.

That grew from 3 people to 6 people to 100 people. Then they went down to a part of Africa, a part of Ethiopia, that is really interesting. It is called Yetabon. Yetabon is interesting because that is an area where there wasn't any civilization. It was in the bush, on the side of a mountain.

I went down to Yetabon to see. This is some time ago. I was thrilled that Raj Shah, the Administrator of USAID, accepted my invitation to go down

there to see Yetabon and to see what they have done down there. When you stopped and looked in that remote area, with the two of them alone, it is not just a matter of 10, 12, or 100 kids, but 1,700 kids were all lined up, K through 12, smiling with big smiles. Their lives had been changed, and all of that took place down there.

I remember that there was a terrible storm down there as we were leaving, and it was all muddy. I told Raj: Anyone under age 70, get out and push. I was the only one exempted, of course. Anyway, he saw the significance of the resource of the Ethiopian people and the progress the country had made in furthering democracy and stabilizing the region.

USAID is now headed up by another person who loves Africa, Mark Green. I remember Mark Green. He used to be the Ambassador to Tanzania. He is a close friend of mine. I actually served with him at one time back at the House.

Raj recognized the genius of the Ethiopian people. We are privileged to deliver a another program they put together, where they would crossbreed cows and start dairy farms in the area close to Addis. It has been a very successful program. Keep in mind that this is all as a result of one family.

I could give examples of this all over the country in Ethiopia. The technical assistance and training to improve the products that they have were done all by one family. All that was largely from Demeke.

There is another person who is set aside from other countries in Africa, and that is a doctor named Hamlin. She actually started the Hamlin Fistula Hospital. Fistula is a disease that people who are pregnant could have. It is fatal in many cases. It is very unique to that part of Africa. So they have an organization working alongside the Ethiopian Government to provide sustainable solutions to the Hamlin Fistula Hospital. It has been a haven for the care of women.

All of this one person started. This is the character of the people. They started treating women in Ethiopia's busy capital city of Addis since 1959. It has now grown to an additional five regional hospitals, a midwifery college, and a rehabilitation center for long-term patients.

I and my wife Kay visited the hospital along with Senator ENZI's wife, Diana, and Senator BOOZMAN's wife, Cathy. We saw the miracle that is taking place there—all because of one woman. It is typical of the people you find in Ethiopia.

They saw the impact that the hospital is making to the lives of women throughout the country to be able to deliver their baby safely and be treated with dignity for childbirth injuries.

So much of this development and progress is due to the emergence of past and present African leaders such as the recently sworn in Prime Minister, Dr. Abiy Ahmed, who are invest-

ing in the lives of their people, and the realization by the United States of the strategic importance to Africa.

They are important. They have joined us in every effort—every military effort—that we have had, more than any other country. None of that was considered by the House last week when they passed this shortsighted resolution.

I tried to work with key sponsors of the resolution to make needed changes to reflect the fact of Ethiopia's progress, but my efforts were unsuccessful. They wouldn't listen to me. I still can't figure out why it is that a handful of people who probably have never, ever been to Ethiopia were doing this to that country. The resolution made a lot of claims that said that "democratic space in Ethiopia has steadily diminished since the general elections of 2005" and that the ruling party "claimed 100 percent of the parliamentary seats" in the 2015 elections—continued insults to our closest friends in Africa. But the democratic space in Ethiopia has never been more vibrant, as the numbers speak for themselves. There were more opposition candidates in the 2015 election than there have ever been in any election in the history of Ethiopia.

In 2015, the African Union observers—they were the ones who were observing the election, and they concluded that the elections had been free, peaceful, and credible and had provided an opportunity for the Ethiopian people to express their choices at the polls. Overall, the AU observers offered conclusions and recommendations to the government, the electoral board, the political parties, and to the media to strengthen that process, and that has been successful.

The resolution inaccurately stated that the ruling party claimed to have won 100 percent of the parliamentary seats. That is not true at all. There is no truth at all in that. In fact, that is not a ruling party. The EPRDF is not one party; it is a coalition of four major political parties with proportional representation from four regions; namely, from Oromia, Amhara, and some of the other southern nations.

The resolution also claimed that peaceful protests were often hijacked by violent events.

Last year, there were protests and demonstrations in part of Oromia and Amhara, in that region, and it did grow violent.

Ethiopia has a duty to ensure law and order like any other country, and that is exactly what they did. They openly acknowledged that people have legitimate grievances and expressed their willingness to address those. They are making strides. The second National Human Rights Action Plan—the current ruling party has embarked on a dialogue with 222 opposition parties. The United States should allow this dialogue to continue free of interference.

This resolution wasn't new. The House of Representatives did this in 2007 also. By the way, they also did this by voice vote then because no one wanted to be tied to something that they had to vote on without really knowing what it was all about. So they did it in 2007. I don't think the outcome of that was ever discussed, so I am going to tell the story now.

The 2007 resolution claimed that its purpose was to "encourage and facilitate the consolidation of peace and security in Ethiopia," but in reality, it focused only on the shortcomings while blatantly ignoring the unprecedented progress the country had made.

I went to Ethiopia 3 weeks after the House voted in 2007. The resolution was reported widely for weeks in the Ethiopian press as the United States sharply criticizing Ethiopians, the same as they did last week. It caused great confusion and anger with the Ethiopian people, who were emerging from Communist rule. You could argue that at the time this happened, the people were protesting the administration under Prime Minister Meles. Probably they were saying that they prefer the Communists because this is something he was responsible for changing at that time.

So they had that resolution. It was reported that it hurt them and hurt their reputation around the world, caused great confusion and anger with the Ethiopian people, who were emerging from a Communist rule and working with democracy.

I met with Prime Minister Meles on that trip, and he said that the House vote really hurt our relationship with Ethiopia. I remember exactly what he said to me. He said: Our survival depends on democratization.

He was also open and honest about the problems they had in the 2005 election. He acknowledged the riots and that better training could have prevented the deaths of some seven policemen. That is not the story we hear. We hear about hundreds of people dying, but that is simply not the case.

Prime Minister Meles also noted that they were being singled out for criticism and sanctions when Eritrea—an autocratic government that openly gave refuge to terrorists—faced no such condemnation. He stated that he felt insulted by the bill, as well he should have.

When I was visiting with Azeb, Meles's wife—by the way, Azeb and Meles fought together in the feud that took over the country from communism, in the bush. When she asked me how the United States could attack our friends in this way, I didn't have an answer for that. Remember, we are friends. Ethiopia has been a partner on the global War on Terror and has contributed troops to peacekeeping missions and supports regional security efforts.

We also met with a group of Ethiopian citizens in Addis who had returned to Ethiopia to rebuild the nation. They

had returned in the mid-2000s because it was the first time they had confidence in the government to return. They were very frustrated and disappointed by the resolution.

Today I am sure that Prime Minister Abiy and the Ethiopian people are also confused and frustrated by this resolution. I want to speak now to our friends in Ethiopia who may be feeling abandoned by the United States and questioning our partnership and friendship in such a critical part of the world.

This resolution, while offensive to you, does not change your friendship with the United States.

I want to repeat that. I want to make sure people know that the resolution, while it is offensive to you, doesn't change your friendship with the United States.

We have a long history of economic and military cooperation that will continue, and Ethiopia is only gaining momentum as a nation. This is apparent when you look at Ethiopia's economy, their military, and the U.S.-Ethiopia trade relationship that they are now building with our country. Ethiopia ranks among the fastest growing economies in the world. This is significant: Despite the recent drought, the IMF estimates that Ethiopia will have an average GDP growth rate of 7.4 percent from 2017 to 2020.

This is what I would have said yesterday, but something happened yesterday that I didn't know was going to happen. Yesterday, in the latest World Economic Outlook, the IMF announced that Ghana had lost its position as the fastest growing economy in Africa, and they lost it to Ethiopia. Ethiopia now has the fastest growth—8.5 percent. We in the United States would love to have an 8.5-percent economic growth rate.

Total U.S. direct investment, including partnerships, stands at more than \$567 million, with more than \$65 million originating solely from the United States.

The United States has a positive trade balance with Ethiopia, particularly in manufacturing, energy, and agricultural processing.

Over the past 70 years, Ethiopian Airlines has purchased more than 100 U.S.-origin aircraft.

In 2016 alone, Ethiopia utilized over \$149 million worth of U.S. agricultural products, including wheat, coffee, and oil seeds.

The United States continues to provide assistance to support Ethiopia's agricultural development. Through the USDA, the 3-year, \$13 million Food for Progress Program—known as the FEED project—helps to improve yields of milk, meat, eggs, and other products by increasing the availability and quality of livestock feed.

The U.S. International Military Education and Training Program—by the way, that is called IMET—the IMET Program was put together many years ago so that when our troops go into other areas, they mingle with the troops there, and then we invite the

troops from the various countries to come into the United States and get their training here. We found out that once the training takes place in this country, we have their allegiance for the rest of the time they are there. They have been working to train future leaders here in the United States and create a rapport between the United States and the Ethiopian military. They had over 600 members from 2010 to 2015—one of our most successful IMET programs, working military to military.

Along with their own successes, Ethiopia has established itself as a world player. Ethiopia and the United States belong to a number of the same organizations, including the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. The nation is an observer to the World Trade Organization and is currently serving on the United Nations Security Council as a non-permanent member.

So I say to my colleagues in the Senate, I would like to remind you that with the passing of resolution 128, we are repeating the past. That is exactly what they did a few years ago. That doesn't mean we have to do it again in the future. Ethiopia is a key friend, and Prime Minister Abiy—just keep in mind, here is a guy who is the highest educated Prime Minister we think in the entire history of the entire continent of Africa. He deserves a chance for a strong start.

I will continue to fight for that strong friendship in Congress, and I urge the United States to give them the chance they have rightly earned. Clearly, resolution 128 does not reflect America's relationship with Ethiopia, one of our most valued allies in all of Africa.

"Are you listening?" I asked my brother. Prime Minister Abiy, America is with you. America is with you.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING BARBARA BUSH

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, tonight I want to talk about the passing of an extraordinary woman—a woman who captured the hearts of Americans across every spectrum.

Barbara Bush was one of the most popular people in America—and for good reason. One of only two women in the history of our country to be both the First Lady of the United States and also the mother of a President, she consistently used those platforms that, as she would say, God graced her with, for good causes.

There are many stories, but one I would like to recount was shortly after President Bush's election. She went to an AIDS hospice here in Washington, DC. This was a time when the AIDS epidemic was a huge crisis. Frankly, there was a stigma attached to it and a lot of nervousness about the disease.

Barbara Bush picked up a baby with AIDS and cradled that baby. She hugged and kissed kids with AIDS. The message was very clear: There should be no stigma. We have nothing to fear. It is time for us to embrace these people. Her quote that day was everlasting: "There is a need for compassion." She spoke to the heart.

She also used the platform she had to empower people through literacy. This was one of her great causes. She believed the world would be a much better place if everyone could read, write, and comprehend, and the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy continues to do amazing work. She has touched the lives of so many—so many young people, so many adults—and brought them into a new world through literacy.

She accomplished a lot more through her distinguished life. She was dignified, straightforward, witty, and well-intentioned. She had a habit of speaking her mind freely, and sometimes that got her in a little bit of trouble, but, frankly, when she did that, almost all of us nodded our heads in agreement.

Interestingly, her Secret Service code name was "Tranquility." For anyone who knew her personally, that might have seemed to be an odd code name. Probably she chose that code name herself, by the way. She wasn't always tranquil. In fact, she was sometimes feisty—famously so.

One story that I think shows some of her feistiness was when she was having dinner one night with the President of the United States—43, who happened to be her son—and in front of many others, including staff, she commented critically on his table manners, which, of course, she loved, and so did he.

The night before she left us, that feistiness was on display when Barbara Bush, instead of asking for pain medication, asked for a glass of bourbon and, with a smile, took a sip.

I think the name "Tranquility" was also fitting for her. It was fitting for her because she was a calming influence. She made things more tranquil. I saw that firsthand at the White House, where she made life easier for everybody.

I had the pleasure of first getting to know her when I was doing volunteer advanced work for her husband, then-Vice President Bush. I traveled overseas with them, traveled around the country some with them, and got to see the calming influence she had on everyone around her.

Later, when I was in the counsel's office at the White House, I got to see

how she made everybody feel more comfortable—including me, as a young White House staffer—encouraging me, knowing people, saying hello to them, talking to them, ensuring that the morale was good.

Tranquility. It was helpful then, and it was helpful through her life, as she was there as the rock, as the adult.

My wife Jane and I had recently become married. We had a child when I worked at the White House. Barbara Bush couldn't have been more gracious. She was a dear friend ever since. In fact, a few years later, when I first ran for public office—I ran for the U.S. House of Representatives in Cincinnati, OH, the Second Congressional District of Ohio—she came to campaign for me. This was early in 1993. Recall that, in 1992, George H.W. Bush—41—had lost his reelection.

We did a political event in Cincinnati. I took her to Skyline Chili, which is a famous place in my hometown and all around Southwest Ohio. Although Skyline Chili and Cincinnati chili is an acquired taste, she at least acted like she really enjoyed it. She wore the bib, and people loved it. Maybe most importantly for me, while she was there, she cut a radio ad for me. In that radio ad, she said: "I always enjoy having Skyline Chili with ROB PORTMAN when I'm in Cincinnati." She said some other things that were kind. Frankly, as I look back on that race—there were 10 people in the primary. My name identification was about 6 percent, half of whom thought I was somebody else with a similar name. I think that radio ad played a huge role in my first election, my ability to be here today and to serve the people of Ohio. Barbara Bush was an important reason I won.

In that election, by the way, I had stuck with George H.W. Bush, who had just lost his reelection, when others were being critical, because I had so much respect for him and so much respect for her. Frankly, I think her popularity was an important reason I was able to win.

In recent years, I made a habit of making a pilgrimage to Maine every summer to see them, sometimes going to Houston during the winter as well, but going to Maine has been a wonderful way to connect with them. I have gone with my daughter. I have gone with my wife Jane a few times. I sit with them. President Bush loves to give advice still, and I love to get it.

Barbara Bush loved the political gossip, and we loved to talk about people and things and what was going on in Washington. She was curious, engaged, sharp, and up to speed.

She loved George H.W. Bush so deeply. She sometimes called him "FLFW," former leader of the free world. Again, her wit was on display everywhere she was.

I remember being with them last summer on the porch. She always in-

sisted on eating lunch outside. The waves were coming in on the Maine coast and the Sun was reflecting on the waves. Family was always around. That is when she was happiest.

I will certainly miss those moments we shared, the encouragement, and the very candid advice that she was never hesitant to offer, but as we mourn the loss of this authentic and admired American, we should all find comfort in remembering the way she lived and the incredible legacy she leaves.

She never ran for political office herself, but in a way she represented all of us, and I think she represented the best in all of us. I think that is one reason she was so popular. She showed us how to handle the spotlight and responsibility with grace, with dignity, and with the incredible way that she, again, was able to bring tranquility wherever she was.

No wife, no mother, no grandmother was more devoted to her family. She had unconditional love for her children, including the 43rd President of the United States, with whom she had a great relationship. Her true partnership with George H.W. Bush, in service to the country, all the way from the time he was an 18-year-old Navy pilot through his career as President and after is an inspiration, that unconditional love and that partnership—an inspiration certainly to me and to Jane as a role model but an inspiration to all of us as Americans.

I know I speak for all of my colleagues in the United States Senate as we pay tribute to her and also send our condolences to the entire Bush family.

Barbara Bush is now in a better place. I can imagine her smiling, surrounded by family, including her beloved daughter, Robin, whom she lost as a child. She is on a coast somewhere, dignified, witty, and feisty, all at once, and she is earning that code name "Tranquility."

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, and pursuant to the provisions of S. Res. 474, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m., Thursday, April 19, and does so as a further mark of respect for the late John Melcher, former Senator from Montana.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:35 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 19, 2018, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate April 18, 2018:

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CARLOS G. MUNIZ, OF FLORIDA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.